Minutes of the
Meeting of the Executive Committee
of the World Council of Churches
8 – 13 June, 2015
Etchmiadzin, Armenia

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Prayers 5
2. Opening Actions 5
   - 2.1 WELCOME BY MODERATOR AND HOSTING COMMITTEE 5
   - 2.2 ROLL CALL 7
   - 2.4 APPROVAL OF AGENDA 8
   - 2.5 APPROVAL OF MINUTES 9
   - 2.6 APPROVAL OF SUB-COMMITTEES (MEMBERSHIP) 9
   - 2.7 CONSENSUS 9
3. Report of the General Secretary 10
   - 3.1 REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY 10
   - 3.2 DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY 10
4. Greetings and Exposure Visits 12
   - 4.1 WELCOME BY H.H. SUPREME PATRIARCH AND CATHOLICOS OF ALL ARMENIANS, KAREKIN II 12
   - 4.2 LIFE AND WITNESS OF THE CHURCH IN ARMENIA 14
   - 4.3 EXPOSURE VISITS 16
     - 4.3.1 ARMENIAN GENOCIDE MUSEUM 16
     - 4.3.2 IZMIRLIAN MEDICAL CENTRE IN YEREVAN 17
     - 4.3.3 NAKASHYAN CHILDREN'S HOME 17
     - 4.3.4 ETCHMIADZIN YOUTH CENTRE 18
5. Communications 18
6. Finances 21
   - 6.1 FIRST PRESENTATION ON FINANCES 21
     - 6.1.1 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND BUDGET UPDATE 21
     - 6.1.2 UPDATE ON INCOME MONITORING AND DEVELOPMENT 26
   - 6.2 AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT 28
   - 6.3 ACTION ON THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE 29

6.3.1 Financial Report 2014 and Detailed Report of the Auditors 29
6.3.2 Revised Budget 2015 30
6.3.3 Update on the Income Development Strategy 31
6.3.4 Capital Expenditure 2014-2017 31
6.3.5 General Reserves and Designated Fund for the Building Project 32
6.3.6 Framework Budget 2016 32
6.3.7 Monitoring Indicators from the Financial Strategy 2014-2017 34
6.3.8 Draft Integrated Policy for the Ecumenical Institute at the Château de Bossey 34
6.3.9 Ecumenical Trust By-Laws 34
6.3.10 Review of Investments and Investment Guidelines 34
7. Programme 35
7.1 First Presentation on Programme 35
7.1.1 Programmatic Work: Integrated, Focussed and Result-Oriented Direction and Content 35
7.1.2 ECHOS Commission (Interim Report) 39
7.1.3 Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Reference Group Report 40
7.2 Second Presentation on Programme 42
7.2.1 Integration of WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance 42
7.2.2 Update on WCC-ACT Alliance Programmatic Activities and Relational Policies 48
7.2.3 Act Alliance 50
7.3 Action on the Report of the Programme Committee 51
7.3.1 General Secretary's Report 51
7.3.2 WCC's Programmatic Work: Integrated, Focused and Result-Oriented 52
7.3.3 Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Reference Group Report 53
7.3.4 Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Emphasis on Israel/Palestine in 2016 54
7.3.5 Integration of WCC–Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance 55
7.3.6 Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiatives and Advocacy Plan of Action 55
7.3.7 Update on WCC-ACT Alliance Programmatic Activities and Relational Policies 56
7.3.8 Churches Engaging for Children in the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace 56
7.3.9 Reports from the Consultative and Advisory Bodies 56
7.3.10 Communications Report 2015 57
7.3.11 Summary Programme Reports 2014 57
7.3.12 Note on Procedure 58
7.3.13 Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) 58

8. Public Issues 58
8.1 First Presentation on Public Issues 58
8.2 Second Presentation on Public Issues 59
8.3 Third Presentation on Public Issues 59
8.3.1 Draft Statement on the Centenary of the Armenian Genocide, first revision 59
8.3.2 Cyprus, Israel-Palestine, and Racism in USA, first reading 60
8.3.3 Draft Statement on Responses to Migrant Crisis, first reading 60
8.4 Action on the Report of the Public Issues Committee 61
8.4.1 Actions on Public Issues 61
8.4.2 Statement on the Centenary of the Armenian Genocide, second revision 61
8.4.3 Statement on Responses to Migrant Crises 61
8.4.4 Cyprus, Israel-Palestine and Racism in USA 61
9. Staffing, Personnel, and Nominations 62
9.1 First Presentation on Nominations 62
9.1.1 Mid-Term Election of the Executive Committee: A Discussion Starter 62
9.1.2 Nominations 63
9.2 Membership Matters 64
9.3 Staffing and Other Matters 65
9.3.1 Appointment of the Director of Faith and Order 65
9.3.2 Staff Arrivals and Departures 66
9.3.3 Changes in the Staff Rules and Regulations 67
9.4 Action on the Report of the Staffing, Personnel, and Nominations Sub-Committee 67
9.4.1 General Secretary's Report 68
9.4.2 Membership Matters 68
9.4.3 Nominations 68
9.4.4 Planning for Future Governing Body Meetings 69
9.4.5 Mid-term Election of the Executive Committee 69
10. Future Central Committee and Executive Committee Meetings 70
11. Closing Actions 70
11.1 Evaluation of the Meeting 70
11.2 Appreciations 71
11.3 Closing 72
Appendix I: List of Participants 73
Appendix II: Membership of Sub-Committees 74

APPENDIX III: REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY 75
APPENDIX IV: SUMMARY OF UPDATE ON THE INCOME DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 94
APPENDIX V: PILGRIMAGE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE REFERENCE GROUP REPORT 95
APPENDIX VI: ACTIONS ON PUBLIC ISSUES 103
APPENDIX VII: STATEMENT ON THE CENTENARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE 109
APPENDIX VIII: STATEMENT ON RESPONSES TO MIGRANT CRISES 110
APPENDIX IX: CYPRUS, ISRAEL-PALESTINE, AND RACISM IN USA 112
APPENDIX X: DATES AND VENUES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS 113
APPENDIX XI: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, JUNE 2015 114

1. Prayers

On 8 June, opening prayers were led by H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II (Armenian Apostolic Church) and by H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima (Ecumenical Patriarchate).

On 9 June, morning prayers were taken from the Sunrise Office of the Armenian Church and were led by H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian (Armenian Apostolic Church [Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin]). Prayers took place at the Chapel of St John the Baptist and St Vardan, on the campus of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. The scripture reading was John 8:12.

On 10 June, morning prayers were in the city of Yerevan at the site of the Armenian Genocide Museum. They were held in the Memorial Sanctuary of the Genocide Monument at the museum's Tsitsernakaberd Memorial Complex. They included prayers for the Armenian genocide from various ecclesial traditions. Prayers were also offered for the Armenian genocide, as well as for Greek and Assyrian people who also died, for the immediate cessation of conflicts, and for peace-building in the Middle East. The scripture readings were Psalm 66:8-12, Hebrews 10:32-36, and John 14:1-13.

On 11 June, morning prayers, which took place at the Chapel of St John the Baptist and St Vardan, were prayers for peace inspired by the Oriental Orthodox tradition. The scripture readings were Psalm 85:8-13 and John 20:19-23.

On 12 June morning prayers were inspired from the Armenian liturgical version of the prayer of King Manasseh. Prayers were held at the Church of Saint Gayane, built in the year 630. The scripture reading was John 20:23.

2. Opening Actions

2.1 WELCOME BY MODERATOR AND HOSTING COMMITTEE

Dr Agnes Abuom (Anglican Church of Kenya) moderated a general session. She heartily welcomed the members of the executive committee, staff, observers, and everyone to the meeting on behalf of the leadership of the central committee. She invited members of the committee to bring their stories to this meeting.

She thanked God for journeying mercies and reflected that at this meeting, the committee can look forward to engaging and fruitful deliberations, reconnecting with one another, and mutual and inspiring interaction with our hosts, the Armenian Apostolic Church. She offered particular thanks to H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II, one of the World Council of Churches (WCC) presidents, for welcoming the executive committee meeting. She noted that the group was humbled by the hospitality and that the life and work of the church in Armenia is much appreciated.

She shared that this meeting coincides with the commemoration of the centennial of the Armenian genocide, which the worldwide Armenian community is commemorating in 2015. The executive has come here to express its solidarity with the Armenian people and the church. The meeting will take place with the backdrop of these tragic historical events. This is also an opportunity to partake and share the spiritual resources that have formed the bedrock of the people's resilience over the many decades.

She invited everyone to stand for a minute for prayer to remember those who died.

Dr Abuom then noted that when the executive committee met last in Cyprus in November 2014, the committee was faced with the narrative of a divided nation seeking peace and reunification. As the committee meets in Armenia, a great deal has happened during the last few months. There is a continuing upsurge in violent extremist groups – religious extremism – that is causing suffering, death and displacement of so many millions of people in the Middle East and Africa. New forms of enslavement of people in the name of "migrant workers" by human traffickers is a phenomenon on the rise resulting *inter alia* in people perishing in the seas, forests and deserts in Asia and Africa unabated. Democratization gains made a few decades ago are now threatened by shrinking space for civil society engagement and by armed conflicts perpetrated by those in pursuit of power and policy shifts. The vagaries of weather as a result of climate change such as floods, earthquakes, droughts, and more have not spared any continent.

She noted that the transition from the 8 Millennium Development Goals to the proposed 17 Sustainable Development Goals debate clearly indicates that although extreme poverty is being addressed, the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. In recent years governments and international organizations have affirmed the need to engage religion and faith-based organizations in the development process seeking to explore how faith and related values might inform socio-economic and development process. The question the ecumenical movement – that pioneered in providing concepts for social transformation such as the church of the poor – is now asked, and which should be addressed is: What is WCC's unique contribution to the global debate on such issues now that it is asked to be at the table and dialogue?

She stated that the current global context demands that WCC appreciates its strategic position and more important to bring clear message to issues facing humanity today. The challenge as executive committee – and for that matter the whole WCC – is to critically reflect on what message or messages are brought from the different parts of the Household of God, when talking about the pilgrimage of justice and peace, to a world that continues to be characterized by inequality, injustice, exclusion and vulnerability; a globe where the economy grows amidst rampant poverty stricken communities, where walls of separation between and within communities are daily erected and where climate change adversely affects the most vulnerable and marginal communities that can restore hope and human dignity. How the fellowship act strategically using its global position, historical experience and changing perceptions of the role of religion and faith to bring transformative message to the centres of power?

Dr Abuom noted that in the WCC's strategic plan last year stated that: "Today the World Council of Churches is aptly positioned to walk and work with its member churches to make a difference in the world through international, national, regional and local initiatives that bring to hurting world the values of the reign of God". Therefore, as the reports are reviewed, it must be asked through our sharing and discussions how to remain faithful in actions to this commitment and what the cutting edge has been or ought to be in the future.

She noted that the executive committee would have received a number of documents and reports from the commissions and reference groups which met before this executive committee and trusts that everyone has had time to read them for relevant action. Further, this executive committee will be expected to reflect on the critical process of the mid-term elections of the next executive committee adhering to the rules as provided by the constitution and to offer a way forward on programme work. It is also incumbent upon the committee to have a robust analysis of the pilgrimage of justice and peace in terms of the process, the methods of work and engagement of member churches and all key stakeholders.

Finally, Dr Abuom invited the executive committee members to share the prayer that the leadership of the central committee prayed at its meeting in Jerusalem in March 2015: God we gather today to continue a time of contrasts: from hope to despair to hope again…. Help us cut through the noise to see what is happening, to see what is at stake. As the story unfolds open us to both hope and pain.

Thanks were offered to Dr Abuom for her warm welcome.

2.2 ROLL CALL

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, WCC general secretary, called the roll of members present (see Appendix I).

Apologies were received from Mr Thomas Kang Hyeono Kang (Igreja Evangélica de Confissão Luterana no Brasil) and Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang (GerejaToraja).

2.3 SHARING FROM MEMBERS

Archbishop Vicken expressed his thanks and appreciation to the general secretary and to the WCC. During the commemoration of Armenian genocide the Armenians were not left alone; the WCC was extremely well represented in Armenia, and the general secretary was with them and prayed with them. He also gave an excellent speech which was appreciated by Armenians and non-Armenians. The commemoration of 100 years since the Armenian genocide reminded the world that there is no peace without justice. .

Bishop Mary Ann Swenson (United Methodist Church) shared that it was very meaningful for her to participate in many services in the United States this year to commemorate of the Armenian genocide. She participated in services in Texas and in Los Angeles, and these were meaningful and powerful. It was good to remember the martyrs and to witness to the power of resurrection. On April 24, there were 150,000 in the United States walked to the Turkish Embassy to make their witness.

Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland) shared three issues. Firstly, on the eve of the centenary of the Armenian genocide, there was an ecumenical service in the Berlin cathedral. There were speakers from the German parliament as well as representatives from the Armenian and Jewish communities. After the service, there were references to the 1915 killings as genocide. Secondly, the church is doing a great deal of awareness raising about the pilgrimage of justice and peace (PJP) in the German context. The EKD wants networks and every congregation in Germany to know about the PJP. One project of the PJP is an ecumenical pilgrimage to Paris later in 2015 for the United Nations' Conference of Parties (COP), which will be focused on climate change. Thirdly, the year 2017, 500 years after Martin Luther posted the 95 theses, will be an opportunity for renewal, and they want to celebrate this with many international partners. Everyone is invited to come, and it will not just be a Reformed Lutheran celebration and worship; instead, it is about partners and witness to the gospel. All the information will be available on the internet on the EKD site.

Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah (Church of Pakistan) firstly offered a sincere thank you to everyone for their prayers and support, particularly during the last executive committee meeting when he was recovering from an illness, and he received a get-well card from members of this committee. Secondly, he noted that in Pakistan, though there are no Orthodox and Armenians, they still wanted to commemorate the Armenian genocide by having a service of prayer after Easter. To his amazement, there were more than a dozen Armenian Orthodox people living in Pakistan; their grandparents had fled there for safety and they still appreciate their heritage. Thirdly, the Christians in Pakistan have gone through a difficult time. There were burning of churches and bomb attacks on churches. There were also many arrests after the bombings, but only 65 people put into jail in the Lahore area, where he comes from. He wants to work on the PJP and encourages the executive committee and the leadership of the central committee to consider a meaningful solidarity visit from the WCC to the church in Pakistan. He reflected that would be extremely encouraging.

H.E. Archbishop Dr Nareg Alemezian (Armenian Apostolic Church Holy See of Cilicia) shared that since the executive committee meeting in Cyprus in November 2014, there have been positive

developments with the election of a new Turkish Cypriot political leader. New negotiations have already begun. The Church of Cyprus and other churches contribute to the peace process. They highly appreciated the visit of the executive committee meeting in November 2014; it was a strong show of solidarity. He reminded the group of those in the Middle East, and invited prayers – not only for the martyrs in the past – but also because of the current situation in the Middle East now.

Bishop Dr Chibuzo Raphael Opoko (Methodist Church Nigeria) shared that, following the executive committee meeting Cyprus, many executive committee members expressed concern about Nigeria and the upcoming elections. There was concern that Nigeria might not be in one piece during the election process. He would like to acknowledge that God intervened, and the recent election was one best that Nigeria experienced. The new president, elected in March 2015, is a Christian. However, Boko Haram has not been eliminated, and this remains a concern.

Fr Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca (WCC associate general secretary, education and ecumenical formation and director of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey) noted that there were number of church leaders here in Armenia who are Bossey alumni, and he expressed his thanks for their leadership.

Metropolitan Gennadios shared that the neighbouring country, Turkey, is facing difficulties with the recent elections. The results will affect political and financial situations. For the first time four Armenians will sit in the Parliament. Further, he referred to the situation in the Middle East and the refugees in Turkey. There are one million Syrian refugees in Istanbul alone. Many are sleeping in parks and gardens and no one is taking care of them. While there are humanitarian organizations working to take care of people in other parts of the country, there are few in Istanbul. As a result, there are hundreds of children living in inhumane conditions; we need to keep this in our prayers.

Dr Abuom offered her thanks to everyone for their sharing.

2.4 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Dr Abuom moderated a decision session.

Dr Audeh B. Quawas (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem) asked if the current agenda could also include three issues that were named at the last executive committee meeting. He referred to the minutes from the meeting of the executive committee in November 2014 and asked particularly about the following:

- Page 47 of the minutes, which noted the recommendation "require that a policy defining the criteria for introducing new projects into the strategic four-year programme plan, as proposed by the assembly finance committee, be prepared for consideration by executive committee in June 2015"
- Page 48 of the minutes, which noted that "The finance sub-committee recommends that, in accordance with the *Financial Strategy 2014-2017*, the executive committee consider the strategy to be proposed by the general secretary based on the risk assessment and action plan, at its first meeting in 2015", and
- Page 69 of the minutes, which noted that "the executive committee asks the general secretariat to prepare a questionnaire to solicit responses and suggestions from central committee members. The questionnaire will be related to the policies and procedures that might lead to the representation goals in the WCC rules.

Mr Georges Lemopoulos (WCC deputy general secretary) noted the first two items raised will come to the finance sub-committee for discussion and advice, and then will come back to the whole executive committee. For the third item, unfortunately, it was seen as a less urgent priority in the last months and will come back to the executive committee at its meeting in November 2015.

The overall agenda was approved by consensus.

2.5 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The moderator asked for approval of the minutes of the July 2014 meeting of the executive committee. The executive committee minutes from July 2014 were approved by consensus.

Dr Abuom asked for the approval of the November 2014 meeting of the executive committee.

Dr Quawas shared that there are many items and recommendations that will need to be on the agenda in November 2015. He would therefore ask that a page included in the minutes list the decisions taken at this meeting, so that they can be followed and tracked easily. Mr Lemopoulos shared that staff do prepare a list of recommendations from the executive committee. Dr Quawas asked if it could be added to the minutes as an appendix.

Dr Quawas also shared that, on page 57 of the minutes, there was discussion about a paper on anti-Semitism. It is not clear what the decision was and this should be corrected. Dr Tveit suggested adding that the work of the document on anti-Semitism will be prepared for the central committee in 2016. It will have a wider scope and that will incorporate the concerns and questions raised from the executive committee meeting in November 2014.

Metropolitan Gennadios proposed that the committee approve the minutes, with the notation that the paper that was presented in Cyprus will come to the next meeting of the central committee in 2016. He proposed that the paper be improved by staff and come back to the executive committee meeting for further conversation in November 2015. Dr Quawas asked that the general secretary amend the minutes accordingly.

The following was noted as the amendment to the minutes; it will be added to page 57:

> The general secretary later noted that all documents that are presented to the executive committee are first reviewed and approved by the general secretary. No document comes to the executive committee unless it has been authorized by him first.
>
> He also noted that the paper on anti-Semitism will continue to be revised and improved upon by staff, incorporating the feedback from the executive committee members at this meeting. A revised paper will be given to the executive committee for further review at an upcoming meeting. The further revised paper will be circulated to the central committee for discussion in June 2016.

The executive committee minutes of July 2014 were approved by consensus, with the understanding that the general secretary will bring an amendment to the next meeting of the executive committee.

2.6 APPROVAL OF SUB-COMMITTEES (MEMBERSHIP)

Rev. Dr Hyun Ju Bae (Presbyterian Church of Korea) noted that she should also be on the list for the public issues sub-committee. This was agreed.

The membership of the sub-committees was approved by consensus. The full list is in Appendix II.

2.7 CONSENSUS

Ms Tara Tautari Barua (Methodist Church of New Zealand), the consensus facilitator, shared that it is a privilege to serve in this capacity. She noted that this is the fourth time that this executive committee is coming together. The executive committee is becoming increasingly familiar with the decision-making processes at the meetings. There is a growing sense of community and shared purpose. The committee is continuing to express its responsiveness to challenges along the way, and also seeking to

improve the way in which it meets. This meeting is yet another opportunity to deepen the understanding of one another and the shared understandings together.

She shared that there is a clear agenda which requires patience, careful consideration, and prayerful discernment. To this end, the group is ably aided by the leadership of the central committee, and all of the sub-committee moderators who will be using consensus in each of the sub-committee meetings.

Ms Tautari Barua noted that she would be monitoring what will be happening with the plenary. She will check to see if the consensus is being effectively used in sessions and if everyone is able to participate fully. She reminded members to continue to use the cards as a discipline, as this helps the leadership to move decisions forward. She stated that each member has *Achieving Consensus: A Guide for Conducting Meetings* and she encouraged everyone to look at the book, as it also includes the spiritual and theological underpinnings for consensus; this drives WCC's understandings of the ethos and spirit underlying this decision-making process.

She noted that copies of the constitution and rules are available if needed. She reflected that the committee needs to bring gifts and knowledge and experience to bear in this meeting. There are those in the group who have been part of the consensus process from the very beginning, and it is a blessing to have people here who are practitioners of consensus at the WCC and at home. The measure of maturity of any decision-making process is always best seen when there are difficult decisions to be made. How the group chooses to deal with these moments as they arise in these meetings will show how far the committee has come in this meeting as it moves through together in consensus.

Thanks were offered to Ms Tautari Barua for her presentation and her presence at this meeting.

3. Report of the General Secretary

3.1 Report of the General Secretary

Dr Abuom moderated a hearing session. She invited the general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, to share his report.

The text of his full report is in Appendix III.

3.2 Discussion of the Report of the General Secretary

After hearing the report of the general secretary, members of the executive committee were invited to make comments and ask questions.

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste (Romanian Orthodox Church) offered a point of encouragement for the general secretary. He shared that the reaction of the WCC and of the ecumenical movement should be accompanied by faithful spirituality, which is spirituality and action. He would like to encourage the general secretary to further deepen this way.

Prof. Dr Marina Kolovopoulou (Church of Greece) also thanked the general secretary for his report. She wanted to emphasize the upcoming central committee meeting. We are called to be a house of living stones and therefore there should be continuance based on the role of faith. Our faith is the source of our engagement for unity. We need to keep our theological tensions. We do not only have social interest, but also deep theological interest.

Rev. Dr Paul Gardner (Moravian Church in Jamaica) wanted to commend the general secretary for his comprehensive report. The report talks about the sustainability of the WCC. With the many challenges that we have across the world, the issue of commitment is an important one as well as the

issue of having hope in the midst of crises, challenges and uncertainties. As a community of faith, we hope that, we can inspire people.

Dr Tveit noted that the whole pilgrimage of justice and peace is about deeper reflection about faith and how it relates to social justice.

Dr Quawas noted that there is a new Metropolitan of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria, elected for South Sudan. He is of Jordanian nationality. Dr Quawas hopes that he will be invited to meetings and of the WCC.

Dr Quawas supports the World Bank on poverty, but poverty is not the only cause of conflict. Sometimes it is a main cause of establishing new organizations. We need to be careful when discussing faith issues with the World Bank. Dr Tveit responded that there is an art of dealing with institutions in the world that have a great deal of power, and WCC also tries to have an influence there. We as WCC can offer values, perspectives, and critiques. It is important that we get those opportunities when the president of the World Bank talks about values. Whether it will have that profile in many countries is another issue. WCC should prepare its discourse and our strategy carefully.

Further comments that were offered centred on the following themes:

Armenian Genocide:

Dr Quawas thanked the general secretary for his report. He noted that some churches are reluctant to recognize genocide; he hopes that the WCC can have its own principles regardless of heads of churches.

Dr Bae thanked the general secretary for his report. She shared about the Armenian situation, and then raised up the issue of Korean comfort women. The women are seeking acknowledgement and truth from power, and Armenian people could make a real difference.

Justice and Peace:

Dr Bae noted that she and the Asian WCC president had represented the WCC at a conference. This was an initiative organized by the international, government and peace activists, including two Nobel Peace prize activists, one of whom spoke at the peace plenary at the WCC assembly.

Dr Abba Haile Mariam Melese Ayenew (Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church) offered his thanks to the general secretary for his report. He noted that recently in Pakistan and India, there are more than 30 gangs from ISIS, and that Christians should have a common voice. In Ethiopian Orthodox communities now, there is a common standpoint against brutal action.

Bishop Simo Peura (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland) thanked the general secretary for his work. He noted there were positive signs in the report and wanted to know more about them. The voice of the churches continues to be needed. There is much that the churches should do in leadership in order to help the situation and in order to achieve peace.

Programmatic Foci:

Metropolitan Nifon noted the naming of 2016 for climate change, 2017 for economic justice, and 2018 for justice and peace in Africa. He asked if these themes were being brought as proposals. Dr Tveit noted that what is written in the report is not meant to be exclusive focal points for the year; however, it can give focus to some of the issues that we are working on. Focus themes already started as part of the conversations of the reference group of the PJP. He hoped that we might offer themes beyond 2018, but this is a proposal from his side.

Dr Kasongo noted that, in the general secretary's report, there was no any report about the Ecumenical Disabilities Advocates Network (EDAN).

Visits of the general secretary:

Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba Kasongo (Église du Christ au Congo – Communauté presbytérienne de Kinshasa) expressed her thanks to the general secretary for this report. She noted the issue of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is not in the report. The visit of the general secretary to the DRC was very meaningful to the churches there and they were thankful to him. She hopes that the journey of DRC will be supported by the WCC and all churches. Dr Tveit noted that the Democratic Republic of Congo could also be added as an issue in the report, and it is a way to also explore new methodologies to old work.

Dr Bae thanked the general secretary and the WCC for visiting the victims during their brief visit to Korea. It raised the profile of the WCC in church and society in Korea, as it was covered by the media.

Dr Tveit shared that the delegation was impressed by churches and religious communities in Ukraine and their vision so far. The church should be an expression of peace and this should be a positive sign. There are different bodies and different churches and the situation is complicated and complex. We are trying to find a way into this.

Mr Peter Prove (WCC director, churches' commission on international affairs) noted that he met with the deputy head of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Mission to Ukraine, Alexander Hug, who had welcomed WCC engagement in promoting peace in Ukraine, and who had provided assurances of the OSCE Mission's political and practical facilitation of any WCC visit to the eastern areas.

Youth:

Dr Kasongo shared about youth and ecumenical relationships. She observed that there are active youth in Africa, but there is a lack of opportunities for these youth to be in international meetings – particularly because of the difficulties in accessing visas. There is also lack of opportunities to receive scholarships. This makes youth, particularly African youth, more marginalized.

Dr Quawas wanted to raise a point of process. He hopes that in the future, the general secretary's report would be put on the electronic filing system SharePoint well before the meeting. Dr Tveit noted that his report is primarily an oral one. Though it was his original intention to have it on SharePoint – and he will do that in the future – it was not possible for this meeting.

Thanks were offered to the general secretary for his report and the discussion.

4. Greetings and Exposure Visits

4.1 Welcome by H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II

On the first day of the meeting H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II welcomed the WCC executive committee to the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin.

Several others from the Mother See were present for his welcome address:

- His Eminence Archbishop Nathan Hovhannisyan, Director of External Relations and Protocol Department of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin
- His Grace Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Director of Inter-Church Relations of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin
- His Grace Bishop Mushegh Babayan, Director of Operations of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin
- Rev. Fr. Karekin Hambardzumyan, Deputy Director of the Christian Education Center of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin
- Mr Karen Nazaryan, Director of the WCC Round Table Charitable Foundation
- Ms Paula Der Matoian, Director of Internet Development and Social Media of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, and WCC central committee member.

H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II noted that 2015 is a sacred year in the life of his people, for it marks the commemoration of the centenary of the Armenian genocide. On this occasion many religious, government, and international delegations, including church heads, have visited Armenia. Armenians were deeply consoled when brothers and sisters in Christ and loving individuals showed their support by paying their respects to the memory of the 1.5 million martyrs of the Armenian genocide, and by expressing their commitment to the divinely-commanded mission of building a violence-free world.

He stated that at this moment, while the executive committee is gathered together to give impetus to ecumenical relations, to discuss a united response of the churches to growing inequality, poverty, the danger of wars, climate change and their consequences; many Christians, especially in the Syria, Iraq, Libya and other parts of the world, are being martyred for their faith. These issues occupy a central place in the church's mission. The World Council of Churches has held an influential role in bringing about the establishment of permanent peace and justice, the prevention of crime, and the creation of a democratic and free society. From its earliest days, the WCC has assumed an extremely responsible and lofty mission, with Christian love and universal human values as its foundation.

He expressed words of gratitude to the World Council of Churches and its general secretary, for the on-going and multifaceted support shown towards his church, which they saw manifested in the many efforts made for the recognition of the Armenian genocide. They gratefully acknowledge the many religious leaders and heads of ecumenical organizations that joined them in prayer at the centennial events. Included among the many guests hailing from foreign lands were the general secretaries of the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, the Middle Eastern Council of Churches, and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCCUSA). As part of the events commemorating the centenary of the Armenian genocide, the forthcoming ecumenical symposium to be held in Geneva under the auspices of the WCC is of special significance.

He shared that the executive committee members have come to Armenia from various parts of the world and represent different branches of the Church of Christ. He welcomed the group to a land with a history of thousands of years. Here dwell a hospitable people, which place great value on harmony and cooperation between religions and civilizations. Our Lord Jesus Christ says, "May they all be one…so that the world may believe" (John 17:21). He affirmed that Christ is the head of the church and we, as members of the body of the church which he established, must with all obligation and holiness be responsible not only before ourselves, but also before our brothers, so that we may fulfil our Lord's commandment: to love one another as he loved us.

Unfortunately, in the life of Christians sometimes dissensions and manifestations of irreconcilable competition, overshadow and become an obstacle to this ideal, for which the church prays and aspires towards, by means of ecumenical cooperation and dialogue. For this reason, the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin follows the development of relations between the churches with hope and optimism, to give greater momentum to joint educational and social programmes, and the expression of our united position on fundamental issues. By the will of God, the experience of ecumenical dialogue and

cooperation will create a new perspective for all of us, when the different members of Christ's Church will be able to approach one another's differences with understanding, and focus on what is shared in common. This also has its tangible expression in the life of our Church. We maintain warm relations not only with the Oriental Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox, and Catholic Churches, but also with many protestant denominations and communities. We also carry on interreligious dialogues with representatives of other religions.

The Catholicos concluded with a benediction that may God support the WCC always with his daily blessings and adorn the course of your lives with new accomplishments. Thanks were offered H.H. Karekin II for his warm welcome.

4.2 LIFE AND WITNESS OF THE CHURCH IN ARMENIA

On 9 June, the executive committee met with H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II, at the chancellery of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. The conversation focused on the life and witness of the church in Armenia.

H.E. Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima began by thanking His Holiness on behalf of the executive committee for the reception of the committee at his provisional residence. He noted that the committee came to Armenia not only as a governing body, but also to experience the life of the local church which had a long history, and with which we share a common history in our Christian faith. He looked forward to listening to the Catholicos about the life of the Armenian Church, and also to his spiritual insights.

H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II greeted the executive committee. He offered special thanks in this year when the church and society are marking the centenary of the Armenian genocide. For this WCC support for the nation and church he expressed once more gratitude to the WCC and sister churches and to all member churches. Through full collaboration, he said, we will be able to bring a better and more peaceful world to people.

He noted that we will be able to prevent atrocities, like genocide, that are being implemented even in our days. He recounted some of the history for the group. The Armenian Church has suffered many losses through the genocide. Many Armenians had to flee their homeland. Many lost their spiritual values and spiritual treasures of the nation. Many were killed or massacred during the genocide. Around 4,000 clergy were killed. More than 3,000 churches were ruined. Churches and monasteries were left abandoned. He thanked God that many countries gave shelter and asylum to Armenians who had to leave and rebuild. He thanked them for their kindness.

In 1918, the Turkish army also entered this part of Armenia. Through a struggle for life and death, the nation could stand up against the Turkish army and government. Through this was born the first Republic of Armenia, which only lasted two years. After that, the country was under the authority of the Soviets. Their ideology was atheism, which was also trouble for the country and church. During these years we also lost more than 400 priests; although there are some sources which give this of 700 and more. We also lost more than 1,000 churches. These churches, seen as redundant, were closed, and turned into other premises for economic reasons.

In the 1970s, there were only about fourteen active churches in Armenia, and nearly 28 clergy. At the time of the collapse of the Soviet regime, there were nearly 23 churches and nearly 50 clergy; after this collapse, there was a great challenge. There was a huge earthquake in 1988, which ruined the northern part of Armenia. In this earthquake 26,000 people were killed; entire cities and villages were also ruined.

In the 1990s, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, turned into a war.

The church was asked to bring some normalcy to the lives of people. The first thing was to educate people who had an atheist background for 70 years. They also had to prepare clergy and to refurbish churches, as well as build new churches. He thanked God that the nation could stand with courage against all of these challenges and could also reorganize its ecclesiastical life.

Today in Armenia there are almost 300 clergy, and all of the churches are active. There are nearly 1,000 churches and some churches are under construction. Thank God our church is living a great spiritual life. The main aspects of our work were education, building of churches, and social services.

Immediately after the collapse of the Soviet regime, churches took on the youth centres and turned them into Christian youth centres. Now there are nine or ten such centres. There are 4,000-5,000 young people studying in these centres where they receive Christian education.

In the constitution of the Republic of Armenia, a separate law was accepted, which regulated the aspects of the activities between the church and government and also activities within the church. Based on this law, the church became able to teach the history of the church in all schools in Armenia. Obviously, together with this subject in the schools, people learn about the main doctrines of the church. The subject is a part of the main curriculum; therefore, the church had to train people to become teachers of the history of the church.

The church also needed to find ways to organize communications and use methods of communication in order to enhance preaching. So, the church started using radio communications and now has two television channels. He is also glad to say that the entire mission of giving spiritual and cultural values of society is given to the church.

They constructed 200 churches in Armenia in a short time and also prepared a new generation of clergy. He believes that the hardest mission is the preparation of clergy. Annually, there are 25-30 ordinations to the rank of priesthood.

The church has two primary and secondary schools and also tries to expand these to be able to bring more support to the overall activity of education.

In all these achievements, they have had the support of sister churches. For the further education of young priests: they once again bring gratitude to sister churches.

He shared that they strongly believe that through the ministry of young clergy, they will be able to serve both the church in Armenia and their 37 dioceses around the world.

The mission of the church is also related to the spirit of ecumenism. Since 1962, the church is a member of the WCC.

Questions were then invited from the executive committee; the comments that were offered fell along the following themes:

<u>Armenian Genocide Commemorations:</u>

Dr Ayenew offered his thanks for the presentation. The head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church intended to be present for the commemoration, but because of urgent matters, he was not able to do so. He wishes you a long life and also expresses his concern to the Armenian people.

H.H. Karekin II noted that in April of this year, they canonized the martyrs of the Armenian genocide, and to this, they invited heads and representatives of churches to be present. About 38 heads and representatives of sister churches were present. The general secretary of the WCC was also present. Indeed, it was also planned that the head of the Ethiopian church would also be present. After they flew the journey they had to turn back, because 32 martyrs were killed at the hands of Muslim

extremists. Now in prayers they also remember the new martyrs who were killed because of their faith. On 27 September 2015, they will be holding a blessing of the Holy Chrism (*Muron*). He invited everyone be present at this event.

Rev. Prof. Dr Fernando Enns (Mennonite Church in Germany) asked about the effects the commemoration had on the people and on the church? It can help to reassure the people despite terrible things from the past or it can also create new wounds. It can have a liberating effect because it allows you to look at the past in a different way. He asked if His Holiness could describe the effect.

H.H. Karekin II responded that it is both justice for our people and preventing crimes such as this. You obviously know the words of Hitler: "Who remembers the genocide done against the Armenian people?" The commemoration underlined that crimes such as this could be prevented in the future. Today, acts of terrorism are taking place, especially in the Middle East. These kinds of events could be prevented if the perpetrators could be stopped.

Armenian Diaspora:

Bishop Azariah wanted to lift up the struggle of the church trying to get more priests. He also understood that the Armenian diaspora is much bigger than the Armenians in Armenia. He asked, how many people who have left have also come back to serve in ministry?

H.H. Karekin II noted that Holy Etchmiadzin, the monastery here, is the living heart of the church. Like a heart it delivers blood to other parts of the body, which is the church in diaspora. There are thirteen million Armenians around the world, out of which 3.5 million are considered to be citizens of Armenia.

Effect of Suffering on Theology:

Rev. Baoping Kan (China Christian Council) offered his thanks for sharing stories. He noted that he is curious to know what the impact of suffering is on your theological reflections, and what your theological reflections on Christology are.

H.H. Karekin II noted that martyrdom of love was at the heart of their theological reflection and spiritual life. Throughout the centuries, that has always accompanied the nation and the mystery of faith in the resurrection has always given strength to people to rise again. Genocide was the climax of the sufferings of the nation. Today the canonization tends to reinstate people in their faith in the resurrection.

Metropolitan Gennadios expressed his gratitude to His Holiness for spending time with the executive committee and for sharing the history of his church and people.

H.H. Karekin II wished the executive committee fruitful work.

4.3 EXPOSURE VISITS

4.3.1 ARMENIAN GENOCIDE MUSEUM

On 10 June, the executive committee visited the Armenian Genocide Museum in Yerevan. They began their visit at the Genocide Monument of the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial Complex of the museum. Within the Genocide Monument, there is a Memorial Sanctuary where morning prayers took place that day. At the centre of the Memorial Sanctuary there is an eternal flame which memorializes all the victims of the genocide. Each executive committee member was given two white carnations, to lay beside the eternal flame in remembrance of the martyrs. Immediately after morning prayers, Dr Abuom read the recently-adopted Statement on the Centenary of the Armenian Genocide.

The executive committee then visited the Armenian Genocide Museum. The museum opened its doors in 1995, which was then in commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. The museum is dedicated to the memory of the 1.5 million Armenians who died in the genocide. Within the museum, the executive committee was given a tour, and historical overview.

The website of the Museum offers a detailed account of the genocide and includes visual material, documents, books, etc.: http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/armenian_genocide.php

At the conclusion of the tour, the executive committee gathered for a moment of silence, and Bishop Opoko led in prayer.

4.3.2 IZMIRLIAN MEDICAL CENTRE IN YEREVAN

On 11 June, the executive committee visited the Izmirlian Medical Centre in Yerevan, a private hospital of the Armenian Apostolic Church, opened in 2013. The centre was an initiative of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, KarekinII, is the hospital's patron. The Swiss-Armenian national benefactors were Mr and Mrs Tigran and Helena Izmirlian.

The executive committee was given an in-depth tour of the hospital by Dr Armen Charchyan, the Chief of Surgery. It was noted that the most important task of the hospital is to enhance the dignity of people. He emphasized his thankfulness to the patronage of H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II, and noted that it is in his honour that they are working.

The hospital has 140 beds, and conducts approximately 5,000 surgical procedures each year. There are about 40,000 outpatients, and the hospital is a leading surgical centre. There are mostly non-emergency surgeries that take place at the hospital and that are planned in advance; about 5% of all surgeries are emergency ones.

It was also stated that the hospital is a site for learning: university students come and do learning there, as it gives them an opportunity to practice medicine.

Dr Charchyan offered sincere thanks to the executive committee for visiting the hospital. Their presence inspires the hospital staff to do better, and to continue to provide quality and compassionate care for their people. The executive committee's presence, prayers, and well-wishes gave them energy to continue their work. He will let the patients know that they are not alone.

Archbishop Datev Sarkissian (Armenian Apostolic Church), who accompanied the group, also offered his thanks.

Dr Abuom offered appreciation, and, on behalf of the executive committee expressed gratitude to the administrative team of the hospital. She noted here that coming to the medical centre is an important part of learning and sharing in the life of the church. Churches are involved in health and healing, and they can learn from one another.

The general secretary offered his thanks for the hospitality received at the medical centre, and thanked them for being leaders in the nation.

4.3.3 NAKASHYAN CHILDREN'S HOME

The Nakashyan Children's Home, also known as the Mer Hooys (House of Hope),opened in 2013, and H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II is the patron of the home. The home provides learning opportunities for girls from disadvantaged circumstances.

The committee visited the Nakashyan Children's Home on 11 June; they were welcomed by Mr Mirijanian, the home's director. He told the executive committee that the children's home currently houses 18 girls, aged 10-18, and who have been orphaned. The executive committee met many of the children living there, and toured the facility. The committee was informed that all of the girls came from different care centres; there is hope that a similar centre will hopefully open in 2016 for boys. After the tour, the girls offered a short dance programme for the executive committee.

Bishop Swenson offered thanks to the Nakashyan Children's Home on behalf of the executive committee. She shared that the executive committee, and the WCC, are committed to a pilgrimage of justice and peace, and that this has been a station on the pilgrimage.

Dr Abuom added a word of thanks, and noted that we will remember the children in our prayers. She noted that one of the focus areas of the WCC is children, and that it was good to visit the home.

Dr Tveit appreciated that we had been invited into their home, and he would like to thank them and keep them in our prayers.

4.3.4 ETCHMIADZIN YOUTH CENTRE

On 11 June, the executive committee visited the Etchmiadzin Youth Centre; it is one of ten such centres in Armenia. The committee was given a tour by H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II. He took over this building from the government as he felt that the role of the church is not only to pray, but to also focus on children. He shared that about 5,000 children have visited the youth centre. At the moment, the centre does not receive funding from the government; it is only supported by the church. He toured the executive committee around the facility, and they observed children engaged in a range of artistic and educational activities.

After the tour, the children offered a concert for entertainment. The concert featured children engaged in dancing, singing, playing a range of musical instruments, drumming, doing gymnastics and acrobatics, and juggling.

After the concert, Dr Tveit offered thanks on behalf of the executive committee. He noted that the group had been amazed by the signs of hope, joy, power, and strength.

5. Communications

Metropolitan Gennadios moderated a hearing session. He invited Ms Marianne Ejdersten (WCC Director of Communications) to present the communications report.

She shared that the perennial goal of the communication department is to raise the profile and impact of the work of the World Council of Churches (WCC). This is done through a variety of means which reflect its core Christian and ecumenical values. The communication team shares stories and promotes WCC programme activities in order to educate, inform about, and gain support for the WCC within a broad international audience, including the WCC member churches, governing boards and the public at large.

The programmatic objective is defined in this way:

> The WCC is an effective communication actor and a platform for sharing stories and voices from member churches and ecumenical partners working together in the pilgrimage of justice and peace, and raising the fellowship's visibility and public role.

That programmatic objective is articulated through four strategic goals:

1. Raising the profile and impact of the WCC;
2. Training and support of staff in communications work;
3. Strengthening the member church communications network;
4. Participating in efforts to develop the WCC's financial resources.

For 2015, she noted that the goals are being pursued through four strategies:

1. **WCC as catalyst for change** – building the reputation of the WCC through its leadership and the fellowship of member churches among decision makers in church and society. This collaboration makes certain that through various communication platforms the WCC voice reflects the values and perspectives of the WCC and the ecumenical movement. The platforms include:
    a. Publications – journals, academic trade publications, policy series;
    b. Media relations;
    c. Website and social networking;
    d. Public speaking and leadership engagement.

2. **Advocacy and making a difference** – this is a timely focus on issues that target and activate grassroots' involvement in particular issues of concern to the WCC and its member churches. This focus is meant to work collaboratively with programmes and member churches to make certain their initiatives include a proper communication strategy, audience selection and activation platforms. The communication platforms include:
    a. Staff training to be better communicators;
    b. Website presence and social networking;
    c. Use of electronic media (i.e. video, audio, etc.);
    d. General trade publications and congregational resources;
    e. News and feature articles (storytelling);
    f. Media relations;
    g. Fundraising initiatives as appropriate.

3. **Building the fellowship** – a key component to the WCC's role in building the fellowship is the potential to share the work of member churches when their efforts converge with WCC programmatic work and values. This sharing, in itself, is also an opportunity to enhance awareness amongst the member churches of the value of the WCC's role in building the fellowship. Much of the sharing is accomplished in collaboration with WCC programmes and the member church communicators. The platforms include:
    a. Work of the regional communication liaisons;
    b. News and feature articles about member church work;
    c. Website features;
    d. Joint communication initiatives with member churches.

4. **Resource development, promotion and WCC branding** – an expected outcome of the communication focused work and points of internal and external collaboration is an increased opportunity for resource development, promotion, and branding of the WCC. This work is a primary point of collaboration between communications and IMD. The platforms include:
    a. Institutional messaging and visual identity disciplines;
    b. Promotional materials – brochures, displays, annual review, videos, etc.;
    c. General trade publications – Just Peace series, etc.;
    d. Marketing WCC communication products;
    e. Media relations and monitoring;
    f. Website and social media.

In general, the communications team successfully achieved its goals through work across its various platforms, most notably in media relations and news services; books and journals publishing; highlighting the work of member churches through the work of regional press liaisons; development

of a robust set of "internal communications" recommendations; translation of key materials from the assembly; producing new materials supportive of the post-Busan programmatic configuration of the WCC; and a successful visitors programme.

The biggest challenges faced in WCC communications so far in 2015 were related to the transition from one director to the next and the need to adjust some projects to accommodate the size and time of the remaining staff and budget.

News Service: Approximately 120 news stories were produced in the first four and a half months of 2015. These news items are sent to both church and secular media contacts through our distribution system. The format of these news items ranges from press releases, feature articles, profiles, interviews, news briefs, to media alerts. These news stories cover a wide range of themes pertinent to the WCC's programmatic activities, as well as issues of concern for member churches, international, and regional ecumenical organizations. During spring joint news releases and statements were made with the Conference of European Churches, All Africa Conference of Churches and the Christian Conference of Asia.

One of the major purposes the WCC news stories serve is to report on statements, initiatives, documents, and resources issued by the WCC, or occasionally by its partner organizations or member churches. In 2015 special care is being taken to connect these stories with the overriding initiative of the *pilgrimage of justice and peace* and to highlight the work of member churches, their initiatives, and their own members. For 2015 there is a special focus on climate change and COP21 in Paris, gender justice and children's rights.

These news items feed the social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, and they become part of reports prepared by the WCC programme staff for their funding partners. Some of these news items are picked up by the media (both church and secular) contributing to the visibility of the WCC.

She noted that a daily WCC media review is distributed to staff. The communications department will provide monthly analysis from June.

The communication team also coordinated the communications service at the assembly of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) in Bogota, Colombia, in February.

WCC website viewership was up during the first four months of 2015. From 1 January to 6 May 2015, the main WCC website www.oikoumene.org was visited 318,000 times by 245,000 different users. That is a 3% increase compared to the same period a year earlier. As usual, the website received the most visits during 11-25 January due to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The number of sessions also increased for the mini-sites such as bossey.ch, donate.oikoumene.org, water.oikoumene.org (EWN). There was a slight decrease for institute.oikoumene.org and pief.oikoumene.org, and a marked decrease in the number of visits (30%) for eappi.org compared with the previous year. This is seen as a clear consequence of the website not being updated while there was no communications officer.

WCC Publications is the book and journal publishing programme of the World Council of Churches. It facilitates global Christianity's "alternative voice" and enhances the larger visibility and cultural presence of the ecumenical movement. WCC Publications are available through distributors Alban Books in the UK and Europe (albanbooks.com) and ISBS (isbs.com) in North America, as well as through online retailers.

Ms Ejdersten noted that she hopes that she will be able to present an updated **communications strategy** to the meeting of the executive committee in November 2015.

She noted that work needs to be done more efficiently in terms of resources. A clear communication strategy that states the focus of the communication over the next eight years is needed. A communication policy would regulate how the work is done, and detailed strategies should be produced for how to work with: media, digital communication (web, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, etc.), advocacy communication, member communication (including fundraising, fellowship), internal communication to strengthen employees and representatives in their role as ambassadors for the WCC, and images and visual strategy (design).

Following her presentation, Metropolitan Gennadios asked if there are plans to improve the current and main website and noted that a network from around the world might increase people engaged in our communications. Ms Ejdersten shared that the website is old and outdated. Before it is overhauled a clear communications strategy should be in place. Discussions will be held with some member churches and then the website can emerge out of a strategy. She shared that perhaps for the beginning of 2016 there will be some improvements on the WCC website. Two new websites for the pilgrimage of justice and peace (PJP) are being developed. She noted that everyone is welcome to join the blog. It is not being produced only by people in Geneva; voices are needed from around the world.

Thanks were offered to Ms Ejdersten for her report.

6. Finances

6.1 First Presentation on Finances

Bishop Swenson led a hearing session.

Ms Elaine Dykes (WCC Director of Finance) presented the finance overview. She noted that the 2014 Financial Report was issued on 24 April 2015, and could be consulted on the website. Dr Quawas, member of the audit committee, would comment on this later.

6.1.1 Financial Overview and Budget Update

Ms Dykes shared the following:

Financial highlights 2014

- Results reflect an increase in funds and reserves of CHF 1.3 million (2013: drawdown on funds and reserves CHF 3.2 million)
- Contributions income CHF 20.4 million (2013: CHF 21 million, without CHF 2.1 million for assembly)
- Other income CHF 9 million (2013: CHF 7.7 million, without CHF 0.5 million for assembly).

She reported that the increase in other income compared to 2013 concerned investment results, specifically the endowment fund returns, and the receipt of an endowment fund transferred.

- General reserves close at CHF 6.9 million (2013: CHF 6.1 million)

She noted that there was an increase in net assets to the WCC. Loans of CHF 0.5 million were repaid, while capital expenditure was kept to a minimum. These were the factors resulting in the increase to general reserves.

- Positive cash flow generated at Bossey guest house and conference centre, with deficit of CHF 0.2 million (2013 deficit CHF 0.6 million)

Executive committee had approved a budget for 2014 including a decrease of CHF 0.7 million in reserves, and actual results recorded an increase of CHF 1.3 million. Variances concerned the endowment fund, which increased in value, and the programme funds. The latter had increased in part as a result of unbudgeted contributions for three years, for the work of the Nigerian Monitoring Centre and for which programme balances will be carried forward. There was full information in the financial report sent to the member churches.

Results 2014 compared with budget

- The overall increase in funds and reserves of CHF 1.3 million compares to a budgeted decrease of CHF 0.7 million
- Total income was CHF 29.4 million, exceeding the total income budget of CHF 27.7 million by CHF 1.7 million
- Programme direct costs and staff costs are CHF 0.4 million under budget (2.4%) at CHF 17 million
- Unrestricted and designated funds are drawn down by CHF 0.3 million, compared to budget drawdown of CHF 0.6 million.

CHF 000	**Unrestricted & Designated Fund**		**Restricted Fund**		**Total**	
	Dec 2014	*Budget*	**Dec 2014**	*Budget*	**Dec 2014**	*Budget*
Income						
Membership & UDI	4,206	*4,050*	-	-	4,206	*4,050*
Programme contributions	-	-	16,158	*16,306*	16,158	*16,306*
Investment and currency	(6)	*6*	1,086	*129*	1,080	*135*
Rentals, sales & misc income	6,925	*6,437*	993	*791*	7,918	*7,228*
Distribution of unrestricted inc	(4,206)	*(4,050)*	4,206	*4,050*	-	-
Total Income	**6,919**	***6,443***	**22,443**	***21,276***	**29,362**	***27,719***
Expenditure						
Direct programme and other costs	5,939	*6,116*	8,017	*8,210*	13,956	*14,326*
Staff costs	5,244	*4,978*	9,053	*9,286*	14,297	*14,264*
Total costs before redistribution	11,183	*11,094*	17,070	*17,496*	28,253	*28,590*
Redistributed costs	(3,206)	*(3,367)*	3,206	*3,367*	-	-
Internal (sales)/purchases	(587)	*(615)*	587	*615*	-	-
Total costs after redistribution	**7,390**	***7,112***	**20,863**	***21,478***	**28,253**	***28,590***
Surplus/(deficit)	**(471)**	***(669)***	**1,580**	***(202)***	**1,109**	***(871)***
Transfers to/(from) liabilities	(168)	*(150)*	26	-	(142)	*(150)*
Transfers to/(from) funds	(49)	*38*	49	*(38)*	-	-
Surplus/(deficit)	**(254)**	***(557)***	**1,505**	***(164)***	**1,251**	***(721)***
Opening balance	(1,671)	*(1,671)*	12,430	*12,430*	10,759	*10,759*
Closing balance	(1,925)	*(2,228)*	13,935	*12,266*	12,010	*10,038*

Balance sheet 2014 analysis

- Insurance value of WCC's buildings is CHF 106 million, while book value is reflected at CHF 41 million; CHF 65 million value is undisclosed, except in notes to the financial statements
- Total loans: CHF 47.9 million (2013: CHF 48.4 million)

- Investments: CHF 8 million held in CHF money market and short-term CHF bond fund to preserve capital
- Continued high liquidity and demonstrated coverage of general reserves and designated funds by cash and investments.

Balance Sheet December 2014

Assets	**CHF 000s**	**Related Obligation**	**CHF 000s**	**Net assets/ (obligations)**
Land & buildings	41,404	Mortgage loans & long term deferred income	50,965	(9,561)
Non-current asset investments	9,605	Endowment Funds	8,913	692
Current asset investments & cash	13,171	Programme Funds	3,430	9,741
Other current assets	2,304	Current liabilities	2,550	(246)
	-	Long-term provisions	959	(959)
Total net assets/(liabilities) available after deducting obligations				**(333)**

Covering reserves composed as follows:

Restricted fund for fixed assets	1,592		
Designated fund for fixed assets	12,847		
Deficit fund to be covered by development project	(23,770)	(9,331)	
Designated fund for building project	1,592		
Designated programme fund	533		
General reserve	6,873	8,998	**(333**)

Results to April 2015 compared to revised budget

- An overall drawdown on funds to April 2015 of CHF 2.7 million (April 2014: drawdown CHF 2.9 million) illustrates importance of holding reserves
- Foreign exchange rates directly impacted results; foreign exchange losses realised: CHF 0.3 million
- Bossey guest house sales 21% higher at 30 April, compared to same period in 2014
- Staff costs, infrastructure costs and rental income all at expected levels, being 33% of revised budget.

Results to April 2015 compared to revised budget

	Unrestricted & Designated Funds			Restricted Funds			Total Funds			
		Results	Target		Results	Target	Prior year		Results	Target
	Revised Budget	30.4.15	=	Revised Budget	30.4.15	=	30.4.14	Revised Budget	30.4.15	=
	CHF 000s	CHF 000s	33%	CHF 000s	CHF 000s	33%	CHF 000s	CHF 000s	CHF 000s	33%
Income										
Membership & unrestricted contributions	3,882	1,082	27.9%		-		913	3,882	1,082	
Programme contributions	-	-		14,467	2,452	16.95%	2,839	14,467	2,452	19.3%
Currency gains/(losses)	(300)	(270)		-	(40)		(2)	(300)	(310)	
Investment gains/(losses)	30	(57)		214	40		193	244	(17)	
Rental, sales & miscellaneous income	6,630	2,120	32.0%	320	137	42.81%	2,153	6,950	2,257	32.5%
Distribution of unrestricted income	(3,873)	(1,082)	27.9%	3,873	1,082	27.94%	-	-	-	
Total Income	6,369	1,793	28.2%	18,874	3,671	19.45%	6,096	25,243	5,464	21.6%
Expenditure										
Programme & operating costs	6,006	2,034	33.9%	8,196	1,757	21.44%	4,304	14,202	3,791	26.7%
Staff costs	4,635	1,602	34.6%	8,351	2,798	33.50%	4,751	12,986	4,400	33.9%
Total costs before redistribution	10,641	3,636	34.2%	16,547	4,555	27.53%	9,055	27,188	8,191	30.1%
Infrastructure	(2,934)	(978)	33.3%	2,934	978	33.33%	-	-	-	
Internal sales/(purchases)	(571)	(199)	34.9%	571	199		-	-	-	
Total Costs after redistribution	7,136	2,459	34.5%	20,052	5,732	28.59%	9,055	27,188	8,191	30.1%
Transfers (in) /out	(262)	(37)		(245)	22		(11)	(507)	(15)	
Total Costs after transfers	6,874	2,422		19,807	5,754		9,044	26,681	8,176	30.6%
Surplus/(Deficit)	(505)	(629)		(933)	(2,083)		(2,948)	(1,438)	(2,712)	

Revised budget: contributions income 2015

Mr Mark Johnson (WCC Finance Manager) presented the revised budget. He reminded the meeting that the budget approved for 2015 at the executive committee meeting in November 2014 was balanced. On 15 January 2015, however, the Swiss National Bank unexpectedly changed their policies, with a severe impact on the Euro and other currencies, which decreased by about 17% in relation to the Swiss franc. The Euro has recovered slightly, but has not yet reached the rate budgeted. This change in the foreign exchange destabilized what was a balanced budget.

He also noted that another change is that the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) has been incorporated into the budget, which increased the budget. He also shared that total contributions income now lies below the level of the strategic plan which had been approved at the central committee meeting in July 2014.

	Programme Contributions CHF m	% of approved budget	**Membership & UDI** CHF m	% of approved budget	**Total Contributions** CHF m	% of approved budget
Approved budget (Nov 2014)	**15.77**		**4.26**		**20.03**	
Fx impact	(1.73)	(11.0%)	(0.38)	(8.9%)	(2.11)	(10.5%)
Net changes in programme funds:						
D4 Advancing peace through social justice	(0.21)				(0.21)	
D5 Scholarships	(0.51)				(0.51)	
D6 Health and healing: ebola	(0.27)				(0.27)	
W1 Middle East and North Africa: RMFA	0.50				0.50	
W3 EAPPI: UNICEF	0.20				0.20	
Other	0.12				0.12	
Revised budget before WCC-EAA integration	**13.87**	88.0%			**17.75**	88.6%
Integration WCC-EAA	0.60				0.60	
Revised budget 2015 (April 2015)	**14.47**	91.8%	**3.88**	91.1%	**18.35**	91.6%
Total reduction in CHF value of contributions	(1.30)		(0.38)		(1.68)	

Revised budget: expenditure 2015

In order to achieve a balanced revised budget, two actions were taken which concern staff benefits. Firstly, the general secretary decided to reduce the employer's contributions to the pension fund by 4%, with a favourable impact on the budget of CHF 0.4 million. At the same time, the pension committee has been able to compensate for the loss of contribution by drawing on a reserve at its disposition. Secondly, the bonus for long service was withdrawn from the staff regulations; as a result, a provision of CHF 0.4 million held could be released, with a one-off favourable impact on budget 2015.

The vacancies in staffing are now frozen. In addition, the release of a provision of CHF 0.15 million has been included in budget 2015, on the basis that staff regulations will provide that only five days of untaken vacation should be carried forward at year end.

Other budget adjustments are set out in the table below:

	Total expenditure CHF m	% of approved budget	
Approved budget (Nov 2014)	**27.94**		
Staff costs			
Employer pension fund contributions	(0.39)		Reduction of 3.7% in relation to approved budget staff costs
Vacancies frozen and other	(0.11)		
Total staff costs	**(0.50)**	(1.8%)	
Provisions released			
Staff long service bonus	(0.42)		
Central committee 2016	(0.20)		
Untaken vacation	(0.15)		
Total provisions released	**(0.77)**	(2.8%)	
Programme direct cost reductions			
Result of targeted 10% activity cost reductions	(0.47)		Reduction of 10.6% in relation to approved budget direct programme costs
Diakonia scholarships	(0.18)		
EHAIA and EHAIA-YWCA-NORAD	(0.27)		
Total progr. direct cost reductions	**(0.92)**	(3.3%)	
Programme direct cost additions			
Middle East and North Africa	0.54		
EAPPI: UNICEF	0.20		
WCC-EAA and WCC-EAA-YWCA-NORAD	0.29		
Total progr. direct cost additions	**1.03**	3.7%	
Revised budget 2015 (April 2015)	**26.78**	95.8%	

Actual 2014, Approved Budget 2015, Revised Budget 2015, Framework 2016

	Actual 2014	**Approved Budget 2015 (Nov 2014)**	**Revised Budget 2015 (April 2015)**	**Framework 2016**
Funds & Reserves brought forward	**10.76**	**11.00**	**12.01**	**10.57**
Income				
Membership & other unrestricted contributions	4.20	4.26	3.88	3.94
Programme contributions	16.16	15.77	14.47	14.00
Other Income	9.00	7.27	6.99	6.99
Total Income	**29.36**	**27.30**	**25.34**	**24.93**
Expenditure				
Programme & other costs	13.95	14.26	14.31	
Transfers (in)/out	(0.14)	0.20	(0.51)	
Staff costs	14.30	13.48	12.98	
Total Expenditure	**28.11**	**27.94**	**26.78**	**25.28**
Net Income / Expenditure	**1.25**	**(0.64)**	**(1.44)**	**(0.35)**
Inc/(decr) Restricted Funds	1.50	(0.38)	(0.93)	0.15
Inc/(decr) Unrestricted & Designated Funds	(0.25)	(0.26)	(0.51)	(0.50)
Funds & Reserves carried forward	**12.01**	**10.36**	**10.57**	**10.22**
Staffing full time equivalents	115.3	112.2	106.9	

6.1.2 UPDATE ON INCOME MONITORING AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr Douglas Chial (WCC Manager, Income Monitoring Development [IMD]) offered an update on income monitoring and development.

Member Church Contributions

- 2014 membership contributions (CHF 4.0 million from 206 churches)
- 2015 membership contributions (2% increase request to 137 churches)
- Special focus in 2015:
  - How to increase the highest value contributions
  - Additional member church contributions to support programme work
  - Central committee members engaged to increase the number of churches that are contributing.

Relations with Specialized Ministries (SMs)

- New framework agreement for ecumenical partnership

- Working Together Meeting
  - Currency exchange compensation for 2015 with two partners
  - Reductions announced for 2016 by two partners
  - Suggestion to work with SMs on consortium grants from new sources
  - Input on programme objectives and prioritization
- Ecumenical Strategic Forum.

Other matters that would be dealt with by the finance sub-committee included the following:
- Monitoring indicators from the financial strategy 2014-2017
- Towards an integrated policy for the Ecumenical Institute at the Château de Bossey: preliminary draft
- Ecumenical Trust by-laws
- Draft policy and screening process guiding the development of new funding sources
- Investments: results, and review of investment guidelines
- Capital expenditure report and plans; general reserves – progress.

Questions and comments on finance as a whole were invited by executive committee members. The comments from the committee fell into the following themes:

Dr Quawas shared that any amendments to the **Ecumenical Trust By-Laws** must have the approval of three organizations including the executive committee. He asked for clarification about this. Ms Dykes noted that any changes to by-laws would come to the executive committee for approval as required by central committee.

Dr Quawas noted that the **revised budget** has not yet been approved, and so it must be called "tentatively revised". This tentatively revised budget has a deficit, and this needs to be cleared by the finance sub-committee and by the executive committee. He asked for more information concerning the changes made to the budget. He also noted that the coming months will be difficult, because the expenditures have already reached 33% of the tentatively revised budget.

Bishop Opoko noted that the executive committee approved the budget in November, and by January there was a financial crisis and the WCC staff needed to do what they had to do because of the financial crisis. He shared that the general secretary and staff should be commended on their interventions, even though the revised budget has not been approved by the executive.

Dr Tveit explained that, after the financial crisis of January of this year, they could not just wait until this executive committee meeting to decide on the revised budget for 2015. Instead, the staff leadership group reacted responsibly. The general secretary approved the revised budget so that it could be communicated to staff in a timely manner. It is still up to the executive committee to decide on whether to adopt it or not.

Ms Dykes noted that the documentation provided allowed for full review of the changes included in the revised budget. The analysis presented detailed the changes and the amendments that were made across the budget step-by-step. If there is interest in looking fund-by-fund, that can be seen in the financial documentation which is available upon request.

Bishop John F. White (African Methodist Episcopal Church) also commended the staff and the general secretary for the creative way of patterning finances under the challenging circumstances. He wondered, however, whether it would be wise to continue without looking at the real estate project.

Dr Gardner asked about the employer **pension fund contributions** compared with the level of the employees' contributions. He asked if there are pension implications about this, and what might be the long-term implications. Mr Johnson responded by saying that this is a scheme that is accumulated during the employee's work life, and it is either withdrawn as capital or paid as a pension. A change

in the level of contributions has an impact on the final level, or expected final level, of capital. Reducing the contribution for younger staff has a different impact than for those who are closer to retirement age. The choice to bring the employer contribution to the same level as the employee's contribution has not had an impact in 2015, because of the compensating action made in drawing on a reserve, but expected pensions would be impacted in 2016 if the contributions were to continue at the same reduced level. The reserve fund that the pension committee was able to draw upon derives from when the WCC retirement fund was closed and transferred to a different provider.

On the subject of the **effect on staffing** Dr Abuom noted the previously approved 2015 levels included 45.5 executive staff; administrative staff not being included in this number. She asked about the current staff levels. In response, Ms Dykes noted that there are 45.5 programme staff in the approved budget, and 43.6 in the revised budget.

Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins (Christian Church [Disciples of Christ] in the United States of America) offered her thanks for the changes made during this difficult year. She wanted to come back to the moderator's question about the number of staff, thinking ahead to WCC programmes. What are the parameters that we need to be taking into account as we look at programme?

Dr Tveit shared that the WCC is set up to provide work for the ecumenical movement, and not to gain financially. We have to spend the funds available in the best way. Therefore, we should certainly not plan for a deficit of CHF 0.5 million. But for this year, we assessed the implications of the exchange rates and wished to take all reasonable corrective actions, without disrupting planned work. With regard to the staffing we did not wish to reduce staff levels this year, rather we opted for freezing and not re-opening positions when contracts were concluded. There are also other reflections about how the profile of staffing can be affected in 2016 and 2017. In this situation, we should discuss how we can manage to keep a level of programme staff necessary to produce what this organization should be doing. If we reduce more than the current level we will reduce our capacity.

Dr Tveit added that he also wished to commend his colleagues in finance, who support the implementation of our programme plans. He also applauds staff, who, for example, worked on the consultation on the Democratic Republic of Congo collegially. The staff made it happen and even raised additional funds. WCC staff will still find ways to implement programmes.

6.2 AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Bishop Mary Ann Swenson moderated a decision session. She invited Dr Quawas to present the audit committee report. The chair of the audit committee, Mr Alan Bittiner, was not able to be at this executive committee meeting, and so Dr Quawas reported on his behalf.

This report covers the work of the audit committee since its last report to executive committee in November 2014.The committee met on 24 April 2015 to review the draft financial statements and notes 2014 and to review the current financial situation with staff.

I. Financial statements and notes 2014

WCC's auditor, PricewaterhouseCoopers, attended the meeting to present its detailed report on the audit for the year ending 31 December 2014. The auditor reported that the audit opinion would be issued without qualification or comment and recommended that the financial statements submitted to the executive committee and to the member churches be approved. The auditor confirmed that no issues had arisen from their review of the internal control system and that the audit had not identified any cases of suspected or actual fraud. The committee concluded that a recommendation could be given to the leadership of the finance sub-committee that they approve the financial statements and authorise them for issue, effective 24 April 2015.

II. Special project audits

The committee reviewed a schedule for the delivery of nine special project audits. Three concerned diakonia scholarships, two concerned EHAIA, two concerned EAPPI, one concerned the project *Advancing peace through social justice* and one concerned 17 activities receiving contributions from one specific partner. This volume highlights a growing trend, requiring increased staff time.

III. Value added tax inspection

The committee was informed that the Swiss VAT office had begun an inspection of WCC's VAT records and that this inspection would be followed up by a second visit in July.

IV. Current financial situation: issues requiring emphasis

Discussion in the audit committee centred on the challenges faced in revising the approved budget 2015 following the decision of the Swiss National Bank to cease its support of the CHF/Euro rate at 1.2. The committee heard that the general secretary had issued a revised budget 2015, respecting the original guidance issued by executive committee, that programme expenditure be budgeted within available income and balances.

The committee considered that the implications of budget adjustments concerning staff pension fund contributions, long service bonus and untaken vacation should be discussed at this meeting of the executive committee.

The executive committee was invited to ask questions and make comments.

Metropolitan Gennadios asked for clarification about the value added tax (VAT) inspection, and wondered if this was the first time an inspection had occurred. Ms Dykes reported that to her knowledge it was the first VAT inspection which had been conducted at WCC. She said that the Swiss VAT office may have selected the WCC for inspection, because following its selection of a change in the basis of declaration in 2010 the WCC claimed 300,000 Swiss Francs of VAT related to capital expenditure. VAT is a challenging area of tax law. In 2014, WCC finance requested a review of its compliance with VAT regulations by Pricewaterhouse, in their capacity as tax specialists. Following its review, Pricewaterhouse had confirmed that WCC was in compliance with the regulations.

The report of the audit committee was received by consensus.

6.3 ACTION ON THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Bishop Swenson moderated a decision session. She began the session with prayer.

Archbishop Vicken presented the report of the finance sub-committee.

6.3.1 FINANCIAL REPORT 2014 AND DETAILED REPORT OF THE AUDITORS

The 2014 financial statements reported total income of CHF 29.4 million and total expenditure and transfers of CHF 28.1 million, and a net increase to funds and reserves of CHF 1.3 million. The general reserves increased by CHF 0.8 million, closing at CHF 6.9 million, or CHF 0.3 million under the target set by central committee. The Financial Report 2014 had been approved and authorised for issue on 24 April 2015, further to the recommendation of the audit committee, and on the decision of the leadership of the finance sub-committee, to whom executive committee delegated authority for this action in November 2014.

It was noted that the detailed report of the auditors to the finance sub-committee and to the audit committee raised no issues concerning the internal financial controls. In July 2014, on the recommendation of the audit committee, the executive committee named PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) as the auditor for the period 2014-2018, subject to annual appointment.

The finance sub-committee recommends that executive committee:

a. **adopt** the Financial Report 2014; and
b. **appoint** PwC as auditors for 2015, in accordance with Rule VIII 4 (vii) (a) (ii).

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.2 REVISED BUDGET 2015

The finance sub-committee reviewed the revised budget 2015, as issued by the general secretary in April 2015, compared with the approved budget, issued by executive committee in November 2014.

The revised budget includes total income of CHF 25.4 million and total expenditure and transfers of CHF 26.8 million, with a net reduction in funds and reserves of CHF 1.4 million (approved budget 2015: net reduction in funds and reserves CHF 0.7 million). The increase in the reduction in funds and reserves in the revised budget is explained principally by the use of an increased opening balance on programme funds of CHF 0.5 million.

The reduction in funds and reserves of CHF 1.4 million in the revised budget may be summarised as follows:

- drawdown on programme funds of CHF 0.9 million (approved budget: CHF 0.4 million);
- drawdown on designated funds of CHF 0.4 million (approved budget: CHF 0.4 million); and
- deficit on unrestricted funds of CHF 0.1 million (approved budget: increase of CHF 0.1 million).

The budgeted drawdown on the designated funds represents charges to the designated fund for the building project.

The decrease in unrestricted funds of CHF 0.2 million compared to the approved budget is the result of the remaining unfavourable variance on the budget after introducing CHF 2.2 million in budgeted expenditure reductions (and after additions to budgeted expenditure of CHF 1.03 million, matched with additional budgeted contributions).

The sub-committee noted that one budget measure concerned an amendment to Staff Regulations, requiring that staff reduce the number of days of untaken vacation.

If no actions had been taken to revise the budget, then an estimated deficit on unrestricted funds of CHF 0.7 million would have been suffered by April 2015.

The finance sub-committee recommends that executive committee:

a. **commend** the general secretary for his stewardship and leadership in revising the budget; and in communicating the measures and the revised budget to staff in a timely manner;
b. **adopt** the revised budget, as attached at Appendix 1 to this report;
c. **require** that the revised budget be distributed to members in accordance with Rule VIII 4 (a) (ii); and
d. **require** that compliance with the revised policy for vacation days in the amended Staff Regulation be actively managed under the leadership of the general secretary.

Dr Tveit recommended adding “the staff leadership group” to change to (i) that it becomes `”to commend the general secretary *and the staff leadership group*”

These revised recommendations were approved by consensus.

6.3.3 UPDATE ON THE INCOME DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The finance sub-committee received a progress report on the income development strategy approved by central committee in 2014 (*Opportunities for Income Development* GEN FIN 04), reviewing milestones for achievement in 2015. A summary of points reported is included in Appendix IV.

The continued financial support of the WCC member churches and ecumenical partners was recognized with gratitude. It was noted that in 2015 the level of contributions in original currencies had remained relatively stable compared with 2014. However, their value in Swiss francs had been considerably reduced by the strengthening of the Swiss franc exchange rates.

The sub-committee recognised that it was necessary to inform the member churches and specialised ministries of the challenges faced by WCC in 2016, appealing for increased support for the important work being conducted.

The sub-committee heard that although much work had been done to maintain financial support for the Ecumenical Institute, progress had been limited in reaching the income development milestones approved by the central committee.

The sub-committee reviewed a preliminary draft policy for "screening" new funding partners, as required by the executive committee at its meeting in Cyprus in 2014. The draft includes principles for selecting new funding partners, and a process by which new funding partners are reviewed for approval by WCC staff leadership or the leadership of central committee, depending on the level of contribution. The sub-committee appreciated the direction of the draft and suggested that attention be given to the criteria for accepting government funds. The sub-committee also affirmed that member churches and specialized ministries are best placed to assist the WCC in securing additional financial resources through increased cooperation and the cultivation of new partners.

The finance sub-committee recommends that the executive committee:

a. **mandate** the general secretary to inform the member churches and specialized ministries, on behalf of the executive committee, of the current financial situation and its potential impact on the *Strategic Plan 2014-2017*, asking them to strengthen their financial stewardship for and engagement with the WCC where possible;
b. **require** that a revised implementation plan for strengthening fundraising for the Ecumenical Institute be developed for discussion at the executive committee meeting in November 2015;
c. **require** that the policy on screening new funding partners be presented at the executive committee meeting in November 2015; and
d. **require** that the policy on financially inactive member churches be reviewed at the executive committee meeting in November 2015.

These recommendations were approved by consensus.

6.3.4 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE 2014-2017

The finance sub-committee received a report on capital expenditure. Total expenditure in 2014 was CHF 251,000, compared with the approved budget of CHF 553,000. Work on the replacement of windows at Bossey and on car park barriers and security at the Ecumenical Centre had been postponed to 2015. The reduced level of capital expenditure in 2014 had had a favourable impact on the level of general reserves in 2014.

The approved capital expenditure limit for 2015 is CHF 477,000. The total includes values for the projects brought forward from 2014.

No action was required by the executive committee.

6.3.5 GENERAL RESERVES AND DESIGNATED FUND FOR THE BUILDING PROJECT

The sub-committee discussed the general reserve projections for 2015-2017. The general reserves are defined as those funds available to the Council after meeting liabilities and obligations, and which are available in liquid assets, without realising land and buildings.

In its report in November 2014, the finance sub-committee noted that "general reserves might close at CHF 7.3 million in 2015, exceeding the target of CHF 6.7 million, or 50% staff costs in that year." Following the strong results of financial year 2014, the projection for the general reserves for 2015 still stands at CHF 7.3 million.

Based on the current projections, and assuming that the deficit to unrestricted funds is kept to the budget level of CHF 0.1 million, the general reserves may be almost CHF 0.9 million above target in 2015. The target level itself decreased by CHF 0.2 million.

The sub-committee discussed Appendix 3 to the report of the general secretary, *Update on the WCC building project*, which highlights the fact that an addition to the designated fund for the building project may be required.

In addition, the sub-committee noted that the *Financial Strategy 2014-2017* includes as an indicator the requirement to review a preliminary financing plan for the 11th Assembly in November 2015. If the level of general reserves attained in 2015 exceeds the target as projected, then executive committee should consider a transfer to the 11th Assembly fund.

The finance sub-committee reaffirmed its view, already expressed in November 2014, that it is prudent to plan to exceed the general reserve target in 2015, and in particular in the current financial situation.

The finance sub-committee recommends that the executive committee require that:

a. a proposal for transfer from the general reserves to the designated fund for the building project be presented for consideration in November 2015; and
b. a proposal for transfer from the general reserves to the 11th Assembly fund be considered in November 2015.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.6 FRAMEWORK BUDGET 2016

The finance sub-committee reviewed two financial models for the programme framework budget 2016. Both financial models included total programme income of CHF 18.3 million. The *Financial strategy 2014-2017* includes as an indicator:

> "In 2016 (or earlier, should conditions arise) should projections suggest that total programme income might fall below CHF 19 million in 2017, executive committee reviews any required special plans for sustainability, as presented by the general secretary".

The financial models assume that in 2016 there will be a balanced programme budget, including CHF 500,000 of costs for central committee.

The financial models identified six categories of costs, namely, fixed costs (such as the operating costs of the Ecumenical UN Office, or the library and archives); grants and special project costs funded from highly restricted programme contributions; the direct costs of ecumenical initiatives;

infrastructure costs; staffing costs including field staff; and finally, as a balancing figure, the value available to cover direct implementation costs of all other projects.

In the first scenario, it was assumed that programme staff costs, including field staff, are slightly increased from CHF 9.1 million in 2015 to CHF 9.4 million in 2016, as a result of reinstatement of the employer's pension fund contribution to the level of 12% applying in 2014. The financial model then showed that the balance of income available for direct implementation costs would decrease from CHF 2.9 million in 2015 to only CHF 0.7 million in 2016.

In the second scenario, programme and field staff costs are reduced from CHF 9.1 million in 2015 to CHF 8.7 million in 2016. In this scenario the balancing figure for direct implementation costs increases to CHF 1.4 million.

While the second was the preferred scenario, the sub-committee observed that CHF 1.4 million may not allow for sufficient budgets for all projects in the *Strategic Plan 2014-2017*. The sub-committee also noted that direct implementation costs were lower than they would have been if a provision of CHF 250,000 had been retained for central committee 2016 in the revised budget 2015.

The sub-committee discussed the level of the employer pension fund contributions, the level of infrastructure costs, the balance in numbers between programme assistants and executives, and the need to implement new ways of working.

As highlighted by the general secretary, new opportunities are emerging for initiatives in the pilgrimage of justice and peace, for joint work and fund-raising with UN organisations, and funding partners continue to express solidarity and new ways of supporting the WCC. Yet, the sub-committee recognised that this is a critical moment for the WCC, and that choices made now will affect its stature, influence and the potential for impact of its work.

The finance sub-committee recommends that the executive committee:

a. **require** that the projects which have financial profiles including "fixed costs", as listed in the programme financial framework, be included with all other projects when prioritisation criteria are considered;
b. **require** that the medium-term target level for infrastructure costs to programme, set at 15% of total programme income in 2017, be applied in 2016;
c. **support** a rate of employer's pension fund contribution of at least 10% in 2016, compared with 12% in 2014 and prior years, and 8% in 2015;
d. **authorise** the transfer in 2015 of CHF 250,000 from the designated programme fund to the programme funds to cover costs of central committee in 2016; and
e. **mandate** the general secretary to prepare a plan for 2016, with authority to adjust programmes, including as might be necessary the closure of projects, conferring with the leadership of central committee on progress, in order to ensure that a balanced budget may be presented in November 2015.

Archbishop Vicken raised a concern. The programme committee wanted to bring new proposals to the November meeting; however, this will be a challenge because the budget will have to be presented to November 2015 meeting of the executive committee. Dr Watkins agreed that the timeline is problematic. The spirit of the conversation was such that they would want to keep the recommendation without the timeline.

Dr Abuom asked about recommendation about the percentage of the employer contribution. Ms Dykes responded that policy is 8 per cent. She shared that it might be possible that the finance sub-committee could support a 2 per cent gap for one year, pending decision for subsequent years. Bishop Opoko noted that there would be long-term impact on staff. The executive committee wanted to support staff.

These recommendations were approved by consensus.

6.3.7 MONITORING INDICATORS FROM THE FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2014-2017

The finance sub-committee received a report on progress with the indicators listed in the *Financial strategy 2014-2017*. Several concerned matters addressed elsewhere in this report. It was noted in particular that although specific articles of the Staff Regulations had been revised to support measures taken in the revised budget 2015, the target date for full revision of the Staff Regulations had been reset to autumn 2015.

> **The finance sub-committee recommends that executive committee require** that, given the reduction in programme income now foreseen for 2016, a revised four-year financial scenario be developed for 2016-2019.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.8 DRAFT INTEGRATED POLICY FOR THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE AT THE CHÂTEAU DE BOSSEY

The finance sub-committee appreciated the draft policy, which presented a section on the overall strategy, and a second section on management matters. The sub-committee considered that the policy sets out well the integration of the work of the institute within the WCC. It was noted that the section related to management lay within the responsibility of the general secretary.

> **The finance sub-committee recommends that executive committee require** that the draft policy be finalised and submitted for approval by executive committee in November 2015.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.9 ECUMENICAL TRUST BY-LAWS

The finance sub-committee reviewed the by-laws, which had last been approved by executive committee in 2008, and the sub-committee raised no particular comment.

The finance sub-committee recommends that executive committee:

a. **encourage** the Board of Trustees in its mandate, and in both the forthcoming review of its by-laws, and in the further development of the Ecumenical Trust to fulfil its purpose in soliciting and managing legacies and other gifts for the ecumenical work of the three partner organisations; and

b. **request** that, in accordance with article IX of the by-laws, the Board of Trustees forward any proposed amendment to the by-laws to the executive committee for approval.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.10 REVIEW OF INVESTMENTS AND INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

It was reported that the total return on investments was CHF 1.1 million in 2014, while for the four months to April 2015 a net investment loss of CHF 17,000 had been suffered, principally because of the revaluation loss of CHF 76,000 on the Oikocredit investment of CHF 576,000, held in Euro.

In accordance with the Investment Policy, the investment guidelines are approved by the finance sub-committee, and between meetings, amendments may be approved by the leadership of the finance sub-committee.

The finance sub-committee discussed proposed changes to investment guidelines, and agreed upon the following:

- For the general fund (CHF 8 million), to avoid suffering 0.75% of negative interest on money-market investments in Swiss francs, the guidelines are to be revised, increasing the investment allocation to low risk Swiss bond funds;
- For the endowment fund (CHF 7.2 million), the strategic level of investment in foreign bonds may be increased by 10%, reducing the level of investment in Swiss franc bonds.

The sub-committee heard the results of a review of compliance with ethical investment guidelines conducted by the investment manager, and concurred with the following:

- Results which indicated minimal holdings of under 2% through investment funds in excluded sectors were considered acceptable;
- There should be divestment of any investment fund in which more than 10% is invested in fossil fuels.

The finance sub-committee requested that the staff document the Revised Investment Guidelines, be reviewed and approved by the leadership of the finance sub-committee, and finalised in June 2015.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

The report of the finance committee was approved as a whole by consensus.

7. Programme

7.1 First Presentation on Programme

Dr Abuom moderated a hearing session. She invited Rev. Dr Hielke Wolters (WCC Associate General Secretary, Unity, Mission and Ecumenical Relations) to introduce the documents that will be considered by the programme sub-committee.

7.1.1 Programmatic Work: Integrated, Focussed and Result-Oriented Direction and Content

Dr Wolters referred the group to the document entitled WCC's "Programmatic Work: Integrated, Focussed and Result-Oriented Direction and Content for 2016 and 2017" which responds to the strategic plan. The central committee had asked how the strategic directions could be translated into programmatic directions. It was a concern by the central committee in July 2014 and by the executive committee in November 2014.

The central committee approved the document '*WCC Strategic Plan 2014-2017*' in its meeting of July 2014. This plan serves as the guiding document for the Council's work in the period up to 2018. Affirming the general direction, the central committee asked the general secretary and staff to further elaborate the strategy especially with regard to the programmatic work.

The central committee of July 2014 approved the recommendations:

- to task the executive committee to set goals for the programme priorities, goals and objectives with the metrics for evaluation.
- that, given the number of the programme areas, the number of projects in each programme area be limited.

The executive committee in its meeting of November 2014 approved the recommendations:

- to urge the general secretary to prepare criteria for setting priorities and ending projects and activities for discussion by the executive committee.
- to develop strategic plans with priorities, goals, objectives, and indicators for each programmatic area through 2017.

These recommendations go in the same direction and can be summarized as a request for:
- formulation of programmatic objectives with indicators which can be evaluated, and
- setting criteria for selecting and prioritizing a realistic number of projects and activities.

Programmatic objectives and outcome indicators for 2016, 2017

The programmatic objectives were developed in line with the general direction as mandated by the 10th Assembly in Busan, 2013, and approved by the central committee in July 2014. This general direction is based on what can be called the mission of the WCC.

The **mission** of the WCC has been formulated in the Constitution as follows:

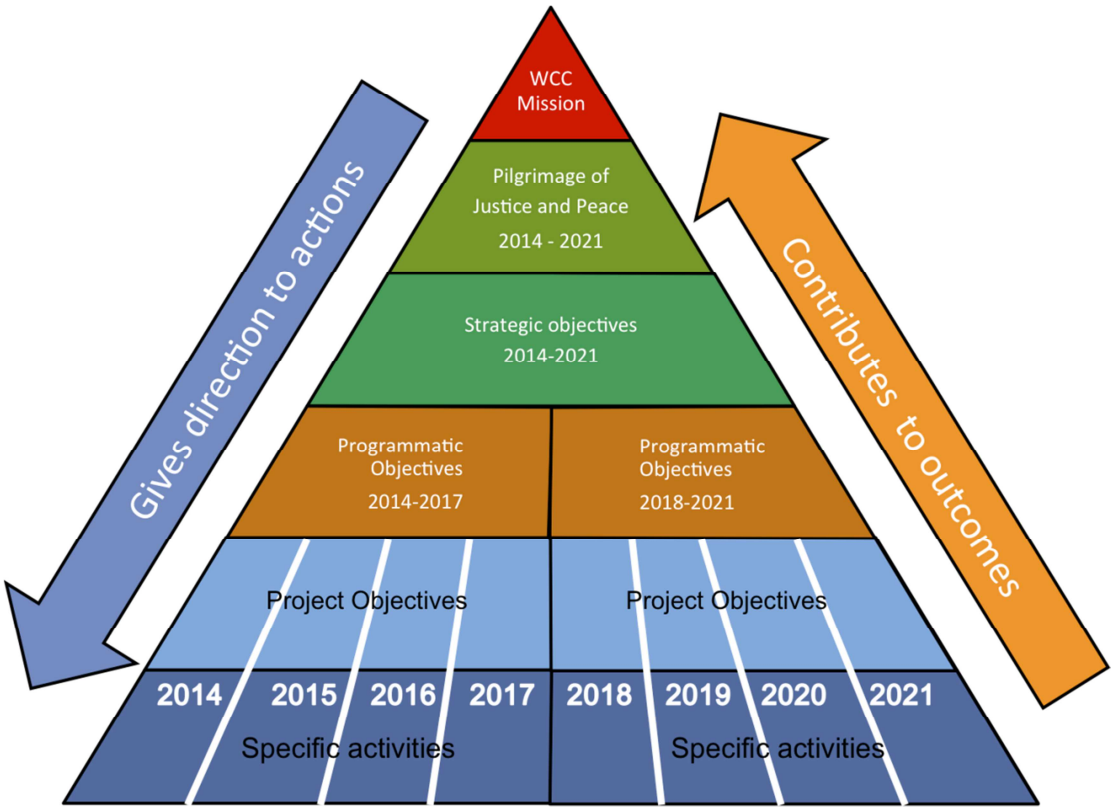
"The primary purpose of the fellowship of churches in the World Council of Churches is to call one another to visible unity in one faith and in one Eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe." (WCC Constitution article 3)

Every assembly reflects on the question how the WCC mission needs to be articulated and implemented for the following period in response to the current developments in societies, churches and the ecumenical movement. The 10th Assembly in Busan, 2013, dis this in terms of a call for **a pilgrimage of justice and peace**:

"We intend to move together. Challenged by our experiences in Busan, we challenge all people of good will to engage their God-given gifts in transforming actions. This assembly calls you to join us in pilgrimage."

The Council will involve itself in this pilgrimage in two ways: through its role in the ecumenical movement and through its own programmatic work. The pilgrimage will have an integrating function for all aspects of the Council's work and life in the coming period.

The involvement in the pilgrimage has been developed further by translating five basic pilgrimage elements into **strategic objectives** for all aspects of the Council's life and work. Therefore, the pilgrimage and the strategic objectives give direction to the programmatic and transversal areas. The projects and activities in these areas, though each in their own way, contribute to the results of the Council. The following diagram of a hierarchy of objectives shows how the different levels are interrelated:



So far the WCC has developed strategic objectives for the Council as a whole and for the different projects. There is need to develop **programmatic objectives** in order to strengthen the connection between the Council's strategic objectives and the project objectives. These programmatic objectives are formulated at the level of:

- General Secretariat
- Communications
- Unity, Mission and Ecumenical Relations
- Public Witness and Diakonia
- Ecumenical Formation
- Transversal issues.

The objectives for the different programmatic areas were presented. For each programmatic objective, three indicators have been formulated for results reached by the end of 2017. The programmatic objectives and indicators help the Council to assess the results reached by the end of 2017 through a mid-term evaluation. The evaluation and an assessment of the needs in societies, churches and the ecumenical movement will help to formulate the programmatic objectives and indicators for the period 2018 to 2021.

Dr Sauca shared how the programmatic objectives relate to Ecumenical Formation. He noted that the ecumenical formation includes ecumenical theological education.

Dr Wolters noted that they would like to distinguish between outputs and outcomes. An "output" is what was done, and an "outcome" is the *effect* of what has been done. If five students graduate from Bossey, then that is an output. If those five students become active leaders in their church and the ecumenical movement, then that is an outcome. He noted that for some projects, one might be able to indicate what has been done; for other projects, one might be able to indicate the effect of what has been done by 2017.

Dr Wolters shared that while responding to the developments in societies, churches and the ecumenical movement, the Council needs to set priorities. Building on an integrated approach expressed in the model of a hierarchy of objectives, the following sets of criteria for priority setting can be developed. These sets of criteria follow the logic of the *WCC Strategic Plan 2014-2017*. In the process of setting priorities all five sets of criteria need to be taken into account.

He noted that what is done should be done well. The staff leadership group have developed five sets of criteria. They are all based on previous discussions and what was developed together in the past couple of years. The five proposed criteria are:

1. Role of the Council in the ecumenical movement
2. Analysis of developments
3. Strategic objectives
4. Participatory approach
5. Staffing and financial capacity.

The executive committee was invited to respond with questions. The responses were offered along the following themes:

- Mission and Vision
- Ecumenical Visibility and EDAN
- Unity.

Mission and Vision:

Dr Kolovopoulou noted that the constitution is clear and we also have the vision. However, the WCC mission at the top of the diagram seems to stay there and does not infuse the rest of the Council's activities. Instead of it being just a part of the operation, it should be throughout the Council.

Bishop Azariah remembered that when he was a young boy, the WCC and its programmes were all over the world. The churches were the fuelling agents of the WCC on issues of development, programmes, and spirituality. These were the primary bases of the WCC. He could see the visible partnership of the WCC in the life of various national churches. Today, however, the presence of the WCC and of the national councils of churches has become minimal. Is it because the finances have changed? Or is it because the programmes are dependent on specialized funding and this dominates the programmatic work of the WCC? Were we more or less professional in our strategic planning at that time? What has happened in the life of the Council?

Dr Tveit wondered whether the role of the WCC is what it should be. The first strategic objective is that the WCC is a strong fellowship of churches. The question is whether we have achieved this objective. To respond to that it is important to ask the question about how the work of the churches is included in that of the WCC. It is not only the effect of the WCC on the churches, but also the churches' effect on the WCC. He also noted that it is difficult to find the link between our work and where the funds are coming from. Many of the programmes enable to involve more churches in the work.

Dr Sauca shared that the mission of the WCC is for all of the programmes and that all WCC programmes should serve the mission. The approach and discourse might look different, but from a deep theological point of view, it is even more theological than some of the past programmes. In the past, there were strong divisions between theological and social positions. Now, we think about how we can articulate theologically every single position. The question is about how we journey together, affirming the values of the kingdom, and following our expectations that God has intended for us in our common pilgrimage. The new paradigm for the pilgrimage that was chosen in Busan responds to the younger generation's expectations. Unless we change the discourse, the ecumenical movement may lose the younger generations.

Ecumenical Visibility and EDAN:

Dr Kasongo asked about EDAN's visibility in the Council's work. She had noted that EDAN was transferred to Unity, Mission, and Ecumenical Formation but, reading the documents, it seems that EDAN was not among the priorities. In the documents, there is a network of Indigenous people and migrant communities, but there is no mention of people with disabilities. The mission from the margins project, though including migrants and Indigenous peoples, does not refer to EDAN. She asked for clarity about this. The general secretary responded that EDAN is reported elsewhere. Its place in the strategic priority will be referred to the programme sub-committee. Dr Wolters shared that the programme sub-committee will talk further about EDAN and ensure that it is adequately reflected in the document.

Unity:

Metropolitan Gennadios reminded the group that the Council did not discover today that we need to journey together; we have to work together and this has always been the case.

Dr Sauca noted that while the idea of journeying together was not recently invented, the image of journey can be used to stress out commitment to the same values of the kingdom. We do affirm that the basis of our work is church unity, but we are also aware of the new paradigm which is more hope for life in the world. The expectations of the younger generation are different from ours.

Dr Wolters thanked the executive committee for their comments and questions. He noted that this document is the start of a discussion. With these questions it can be developed further. He agrees that the issues of unity are not only located in the mission of the Council, but need to inform every aspect of the Council's work. Unity is not only an agenda for Faith and Order. For example the PJP needs to be an expression of our common search for unity in its entire aspects – ecclesiological, missiological, and theological.

7.1.2 ECHOS COMMISSION (INTERIM REPORT)

Ms Martina Viktorie Kopecká (Czechoslovak Hussite Church) as convenor of the ECHOS commission shared an interim report. She was grateful that Dr Tveit mentioned ECHOS in his report in the paragraph concerning the inter-faith dialogue

She noted that members of ECHOS are able and ready to cooperate. As individuals they may not be able to create anything on their own, but as an ECHOS commission, they could become a real voice, not just an 'echo'.

During the meeting, they discussed the vision of the commission, and she shared a couple of points collected from ECHOS vision statement:

> The voice of our Lord, Jesus Christ, calls us to bring fresh energy and to become a new prophetic voice, that reflects the daily reality of our diverse local contexts and that recognizes the needs of our neighbours, sisters and brothers, who joined our common pilgrimage. We hear the loud voice of our world that calls for justice and peace.
>
> We, as pilgrims on a journey, are prepared for action, facilitation, advocacy and reconciliation. We, as the young generation, emphasize the power of common prayer as an inexhaustible source. We are called to strengthen the fellowship and build new relationships among WCC member churches and to continue the dialogue and sharing with our partner ecumenical organizations.

We are open to continuing intergenerational dialogue. With appreciation for your deep knowledge and experience, we are ready to listen and learn, and we also bring our education and our professional skills to share. And as we all live in the multi-religious world, we perceive the necessity of continuing interreligious dialogues and of building trust among religions.

We, as young Christians, gathered within the ECHOS commission on youth engagement, strive for sustainable and active involvement of young adults in all levels of the WCC by developing leadership skills and advocating for broader participation of youth in the ecumenical movement.

As growth is not just about individual leaders, we emphasize also the ability to co-operate and work as strong team.

We invite all to grow up with us, we encourage you to deepen and refresh your spirituality, and we highlight the importance of moving together.

We are not just an echo. We are a real young voice. We all are on a pilgrimage of justice and peace!

Ms Kopecká concluded her interim report and the executive committee was invited to offer questions in response to the report. Dr Wolters added that some commissions only have their summary report ready for this meeting. By November 2015, there will be full reports of every reference group and commission.

Metropolitan Gennadios noted that the ECHOS visited only one member church in Egypt. Ms Kopecká shared that they visited the Coptic Orthodox Church because there was a youth bishopric and because the vice-moderator of ECHOS is involved in ecumenical networking in Egypt. Dr Abuom noted that in terms of organizing meetings in the future that this could be taken into consideration, and could go to the programme sub-committee.

7.1.3 PILGRIMAGE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE REFERENCE GROUP REPORT

Dr Enns shared the report of the reference group of the pilgrimage of justice and peace (PJP). He noted that the reference group had a very good meeting at Bossey in February 2015 where the reference group began its own pilgrimage. He added that the final PJP reference group report is available, and that it includes sixteen recommendations (see Appendix V).

The first meeting of the PJP reference group had 25 people. The group was happy to see that there were representatives from the Roman Catholic Church and the Muslim, and Jewish communities. This makes a difference. People say the same thing in different ways in the presence of others. This helped the group greatly. The Catholic Church is also eager to be part of the common journey.

The report of the reference group was worked on and written by several people. He offered particular thanks to Ms Adele Halliday, who is a member of the PJP reference group and the minute-writer for the WCC governance meetings, who helpfully did the final edits so that the report would be ready for this meeting.

Dr Enns shared the following:

- Pilgrimage is a journey and a process. If the PJP is taken seriously a PJP then by the end of it we will not be the same; we will have changed. If you are not ready for that kind of change, then you should not start the PJP. We should be aware of what that means for us in ecclesiological terms and perhaps it could provide an opportunity to bring the WCC back to being a movement.

- The PJP is a spiritual journey. The WCC is not a non-governmental organization; it is a fellowship of churches. The PJP is really brings us back to our spiritual roots and re-roots all of our roots in spirituality. Being at this spiritual place in Armenia is also a point for us.

He offered background about the self-understanding of the reference group, and about how they got started. He also outlined the three dimensions that were picked up from the central committee: the *via positiva* (celebration of our gifts), *via negativa* (looking at the wounds), *via transformativa* (transformation and allowing ourselves to be transformed in order to transform).

The reference group hopes to give guidance to the WCC and to the member churches. Some churches are already starting their own pilgrimages and their own journeys. In Germany, for example, there were tens of thousands of people from Germany and other countries who recently came to the city of Stuttgart for a church convention. There, they engaged in a five-day festival of faith from 3-7 June, 2015; it also included debates, music, worship and culture.

Dr Enns noted that there is a proposal for a specific focus on a region each year, and that 2016 will be a focus year on Israel-Palestine. There is also a recommendation about the composition of the theological study group. He noted that communications will be very important. Finally he thanked that the staff who were accompanying the process during the meeting in February.

The executive committee was invited to offer questions for discussion. Comments were offered along the following themes:

Action on the Report's Recommendations:

Metropolitan Gennadios noted that this was the first meeting of the PJP reference group which tried to deal with certain matters in a very broad sense; this is visible in the sixteen recommendations. After the next meeting, it might be helpful to deal clearly and precisely with issues that the PJP will be working on in the future.

Dr Enns hoped that the executive committee will take action on the report. He noted that there is the urgency of time: the WCC 10th assembly was in November 2013 and it is already June 2015. If we want to fulfil the mandate that was given by the assembly about the PJP then the reference group needs to hear responses so that they can move forward.

Dimensions of the PJP:

Metropolitan Nifon noted that the three dimensions give the tone for all of the reflection in future. He found it a very academic way of putting this (*via positiva, via negativa, and via transformativa*). A clearer definition of *via positive* would be helpful. We want to transform the injustices, but what about peace? And what are the spiritual dimensions of each one of the three? When talking about each of the dimensions a more elaborative way of explaining them might be needed, otherwise the reflections of the group will be too weak.

Dr Abuom noted that it is an overarching theme. Dr Tveit shared that this is the beginning of a new time and approach. We will try to have all our programmes with this orientation. The PJP will include more than WCC programmes. The PJP reference group will develop strategies. At this stage, we need an open discussion on the report. There are ways that we can move forward without making decisions on all of the recommendations.

Dr Enns noted that we need to develop in depth responses, and not just respond to one metaphor. The assembly decided to have a theological study group; this was not a decision of the reference group.

Thematic Foci:

Dr Tveit proposed that the theme for 2016 is wider than Israel-Palestine alone, but is rather on the PJP in the Middle East. He also hoped that the wider reflection is related to how the staffing profiles are organized, which can be discussed in any committee.

Dr Abuom shared that any sub-committee, in addition to programme, are welcome to consider the meaning, process, strategies, engagement of different sectors of society and membership. Dr Abuom said, however, that the recommendations go through the programme sub-committee for action.

Bishop White offered a prayer to close the session.

7.2 SECOND PRESENTATION ON PROGRAMME

Dr Abuom moderated a hearing session. Prof. Dr Isabel Phiri (WCC Associate General Secretary, Public Witness and Diakonia) was invited to present the programme work.

7.2.1 INTEGRATION OF WCC-ECUMENICAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

1. Introduction: recommendations of governing bodies

The executive committee at its November 2014 meeting received with appreciation and affirmed the document *Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) and Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiative and Advocacy (EHAIA),* Doc. No. 18, which provided the background to the ecumenical intiatives EAA and EHAIA. The executive committee approved the following recommendations:

a. To mandate the general secretary to take necessary steps to finalize the integration process of EAA into WCC in line with the recommendations of the executive committee listed in the minutes of 9 July 2014.

b. To discuss the structure of how EAA relates with the WCC projects EHAIA and economy of life at its meeting in June 2015.

In accordance with the request of the executive committee, the new ecumenical initiative[1] was accepted by the WCC, and was named WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (WCC-EAA) with effect from 1 March 2015. A memorandum of understanding between the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance and the World Council of Churches was signed on 27 February 2015. One of the action points in the said memorandum of understanding reads:

The associate general secretary (AGS) will lead the process of integration of WCC-EAA within the WCC, both within staff teams, and in the integration of the work itself. In consultation with the WCC-EAA co-ordinator, WCC will prepare for discussion at executive committee in June 2015 a document describing the manner in which the work of WCC-EAA integrates with WCC-EHAIA and the activities of economy of life project.

The WCC Strategic Plan 2014-2017 which was approved by the central committee in July 2014 highlights the importance of working in an integrated and focused way. In the context of programmatic areas and transversals it states that:

> The advantage of such a matrix approach is that the transversal issues do not become isolated pieces of work; they rather inform and shape the work done in the programmatic areas. This integrated way of working helps the Council to bring together expertise in different areas,

[1] An ecumenical initiative is planned, implemented and financed in close cooperation with member churches, ecumenical organisations and specialized ministries under the leadership of the WCC.

without losing the flexibility needed for adequate response to the concerns of churches in the coming years.

Although the above statement was made in the context of programme areas and transversal issues, it provides an approach and spirit in which the staff and work of WCC–EAA are being integrated into the work of WCC.

Within the public witness and diakonia programmatic area, the WCC-EAA joins other ecumenical initiatives, namely:

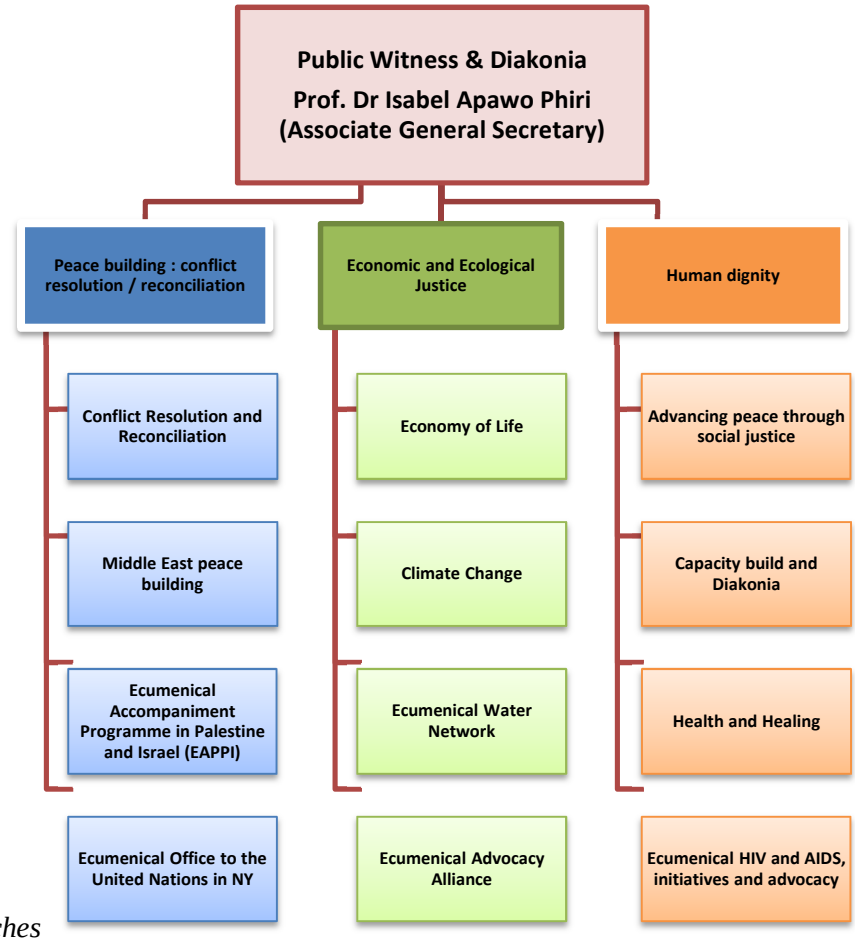
- Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI)
- Ecumenical Water Network (EWN)
- Ecumenical HIV & AIDS Initiatives and Advocacy (EHAIA).

All ecumenical initiatives work in an integrated way within the programme areas of the WCC. Therefore, this document proposes the integration process of the WCC-EAA into the WCC programmatic work at two levels, namely staffing and activity.

2. Staffing

Recognizing the resonance of its current campaigns, WCC-EAA as an ecumenical initiative is situated in the economic and ecological justice section, within the programmatic area of public witness and diakonia. The WCC-EAA food campaign is closely related to the work on economic justice, climate change and Ecumenical Water Network. The WCC-EAA HIV campaign is related to the work on health and healing, and to that of WCC-EHAIA. WCC-EAA's current campaign foci are valid up to 2017 when the EAA reference group, with EAA's participating organizations, will review its campaign issues; at the same time, the WCC programmatic work will undergo an evaluation.

The organogram below shows where the WCC-EAA is currently located within public witness and diakonia.



Within this framework, WCC-EAA will have four positions as follows:

- Interim food campaign consultant/coordinator is Dr Manoj Kurian at 60%. This position has been advertised as 100% position with starting date of 1 August 2015.
- Interim HIV campaign consultant/coordinator is Dr Sue Parry (Purcell Gilpin) at 50%. This position has been advertised as a 100% position.
- The adverts are designed in such a way that the person applying knows that the position they are applying for may have the added responsibility of becoming overall coordinator for WCC-EAA. The most suitable candidate will be responsible for coordinating WCC-EAA as an initiative in addition to being a consultant/coordinator of one of the campaigns.
- Ms Sara Speicher has signed a contract with WCC as a communication consultant at 40%. The WCC-EAA communication consultant will plan work in consultation with the WCC director of communications and in line with the WCC's Communication Strategy; and will collaborate and be involved in the work of the WCC communication team.
- Ms Alexandra Pomezny is the interim administrative assistant for WCC-EAA at 40%.

Therefore, the lines of responsibility and accountability will be as follows:

a. The WCC-EAA co-ordinator
    i. Reports to the associate general secretary for public witness and diakonia (AGS)
    ii. Serves as a member of the WCC-EAA reference group with voice and without participation in decision making.
    iii. Facilitates the work of the WCC-EAA reference group
    iv. Provides the staff liaison between WCC leadership and governance and the reference group, and
    v. Oversees fundraising and the management of the EAA and works closely with IMD and communications.

b. WCC- EAA campaign consultants
    i. One campaign consultant also takes the role of WCC-EAA coordinator;
    ii. The campaign consultant who is not coordinator reports to the WCC–EAA coordinator;
    iii. The food campaign consultant is a team member of the economic and ecological justice section of public witness and diakonia (PWD) programme and will plan work closely with all projects in this section and the AGS;
    iv. The WCC-EAA HIV campaign consultant is a team member of the human dignity section of public witness and diakonia programme and will plan work closely with health and healing and EHAIA projects and the AGS;
    v. The WCC-EAA food campaign consultant will also plan work with the food campaign strategy group;
    vi. The WCC-EAA HIV campaign consultant will also plan work with the HIV campaign strategy group;
    vii. Work closely with IMD and communications.

c. Communication consultant
    i. Reports to the WCC director of communications;
    ii. Works in co-operation with the WCC-EAA co-ordinator and the WCC-EAA campaign consultants;
    iii. The WCC-EAA communication consultant will plan work in consultation with the WCC director of communications and in line with the WCC's communication strategy; and will collaborate and be involved in the work of the WCC communication team.

d. Administrative assistant
    i. Reports to the WCC-EAA co-ordinator;
    ii. Works with the WCC-EAA campaign consultants, communication consultant and IMD team;
    iii. Contributes to work in PWD and in WCC as assigned by the associate general secretary.

3. Areas of cooperation in the activities for 2015

It is the responsibility of the WCC leadership to give direction and monitor the process of integration of WCC-EAA into the work of WCC.

Advocacy around the issue of food justice
At a global level, there is a natural interconnectedness in the discourse about extreme poverty, climate change, water and sanitation, food insecurity and poor health. The WCC has a long tradition of addressing the causes of economic and ecological injustices. EAA has been addressing issues of injustice in the means of producing, distributing and accessing food and adequate nutrition using a rights-based approach.

Advocacy around food justice will bring together a team from the following activities:
- Food for life campaign (D92A to D92C);
- From the *financialisation* of food to life-enhancing agriculture (D13);
- Global survey and publication on theological reflection on climate justice and the role of the churches (D22).
- Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) (D3), since the Commission for World Food Security (CFS) has commissioned a study from the HLPE (High Level Panel of Experts) which has produced a report on Water for Food Security and Nutrition.

Each of the four projects: economy of life for all, climate change, Ecumenical Water Network and WCC–EAA food campaign is accompanied by either a reference group or a working group which guides the activities of the project.

Advocacy on HIV and AIDS
Health and healing, EHAIA and WCC-EAA have long-standing relationships with WHO and UNAIDS in the area of HIV and AIDS. Now that they are all under WCC, there is need to develop very clear guidelines on how WCC is represented at WHO and UNAIDS to avoid competition and confusing the international partners.

From the 2015 programme plans, it is clear that WCC-EAA has taken a human rights approach to the HIV campaign focusing on access to treatment (especially paediatric medications and diagnostics), advocacy with pharmaceutical companies, resource mobilization for the HIV response (including for faith-based actors), and eliminating stigma and discrimination. WCC-EAA works at the international level on policy and practice, particularly linking intergovernmental and civil society organizations and networks with faith-based organizations' responses.

EHAIA's approach is through the language of justice and includes biblical and theological reflection. EHAIA works with churches, theological institutions, ecumenical partners, individuals and networks of people living with HIV and all people of goodwill to respond to HIV and AIDS in Africa and globally. EHAIA motivates, educates, trains, publishes and distributes resource material and facilitates collaborative partnerships. EHAIA addresses HIV, sexual and gender-based violence, gender and economic disparities, sex, sexuality and sexual reproductive health, theological education and church leadership. EHAIA's advocacy is at the grassroots level with the church leaders on addressing injustice issues which have contributed to HIV and AIDs.

The WCC-EAA HIV campaign works with a working (strategy) group and EHAIA works with an international reference group. There is an overlap in some of the members on the strategy and on the reference group, which helps to support communication and collaboration and avoid duplication.

Areas of collaboration between the WCC-EAA HIV Campaign and EHAIA:
- work with religious leaders
- production of theological materials
- preparations of worship and study materials for the AIDS pre-conference in 2016 and for World AIDS Day in 2015 and 2016
- zero tolerance to discrimination and stigma .

Health and healing is broader than the HIV campaign and the EHAIA project. It gave birth to EHAIA. It deals with issues of health justice as it works with WHO, UNAIDS and member churches. Health and healing drew the lessons learnt from the ecumenical response to HIV in its ecumenical response to Ebola.

Areas of collaboration between WCC-EAA HIV campaign, health and healing project and EHAIA
- work on sexual and reproductive health
- gender based violence
- Consortium with World YWCA on Adolescent HIV Prevention Education and Health.

4. Long term integration plans (after evaluation of 2017)

In the context of reduced budget and a call to priority setting, a comprehensive process needs to be put into place to restructure public witness and diakonia as follows:

a. Instead of public witness having three sections, namely peace building, economic and ecological justice and human dignity, there should be only two sections: public witness and diakonia.
b. In this proposed configuration, the WCC-EAA's location will be based on the new chosen themes. The diakonia section would combine what is currently economic and ecological justice and human dignity.
c. Since the activities of ecumenical initiatives are recommended to the general secretary by their reference groups and/or working groups, in 2016 there should be a joint meeting of reference groups and working groups in diakonia to discuss:
    i. prioritisation process
    ii. integration of activities
    iii. possibility of reducing the number of reference groups and working groups within public witness and diakonia
d. WCC to have a formal memorandum of understanding with UNAIDS in order to clarify WCC's lines of engagement and representation through WCC- EAA, EHAIA and health and healing.

5. WCC-EAA budget and its implication for staffing in 2016

WCC-EAA's budget is included in WCC's revised budget 2015, with total income CHF 550,000.

CHF 120,000 is ear-marked for the third and final year of a project funded by Norad, which aims to strengthen the faith-based voice in global and regional policy spaces on sexual and reproductive human rights and HIV and the post-2015 development consultation process.

Of CHF 430,000 of contributions for the WCC-EAA campaigns, 45% is received from two funding partners; six partners in total provide over 70%.

In 2015, staff costs include part-time contracts, for less than a full year. If two full-time contracts are issued in 2016 to executives, together with an assistant at 40%, then staff costs increase by CHF

81,000 (44%). Infrastructure charges, levied at about CHF 47,000 per full-time equivalent programme staff, would increase by CHF 49,000. With contribution income at CHF 430,000, the financial profile is barely sustainable.

With the support of IMD, WCC-EAA is seeking additional funding, including a possible new contract funded by Norad.

WCC-EAA revised budget 2015

	Campaigns CHF 000	Norad project CHF 000	Total CHF 000	
Contributions	430	120	550	
Implementation costs	155	106	261	48%
Staff costs	175	9	184	34%
Staff - consultant	30		30	6%
Infrastructure	59	5	64	12%
Total costs	419	120	539	100%
Closing balance	11	-	11	
Full-time equivalents: staffing		Executives	1.06	
		Assistant	0.3	
			1.36	

2016 framework

	Campaigns CHF 000	Norad project CHF 000	Total CHF 000	
Contributions	430	-	430	
Implementation costs	22	-	22	5%
Staff costs	265	-	265	62%
Staff - consultant	30	-	30	7%
Infrastructure	113	-	113	26%
Total costs	430	-	430	100%
Closing balance	-	-	-	
Framework full-time equivalents		Executives	2.0	
		Assistant	0.4	
			2.4	

Comments and questions were invited from the executive committee the report. The comments received were on the following themes:

Integration Process:

Metropolitan Gennadios asked about item 1a about the integration process. He asked if there is a deadline for this, or if it will continue indefinitely. Dr Tveit shared that the formal part of the integration is finished through the agreement. But, the practical implementation of this is on-going. Dr Phiri affirmed that there are two levels of integration. The formal one is completed. The practical level is related to staffing. Dr Abuom noted that the report needs to reflect what was written in the general secretary's report.

Financial Implications:

Dr Quawas asked about a recommendation on financial conditions being met that was approved at the previous executive committee meeting. He asked whether the job was done, and whether the approval of the work done will come. He also noted that, under the financial issues, it was not clear that the 2015 budget was for the full year or for part of the year.

Ms Dykes noted that it will need to be for less than one year, because the EAA became part of the WCC on 1 March, so the budget cannot start before that. Further, not all staffing is for the full year. One staff is for 10 months, and there are significant differences in staff costs.

Dr Quawas asked why, in the framework of 2016, is there 60,000 more – a big difference between the 10 months of the year in 2015 and the full year in 2016? He would like some explanation. Ms Dykes responded that in looking at the scheduled concerned that in the revised budget for 2015, it was at the level of 1.06 and in the 2016 framework it is a projection. If the two staff positions are recruited in the later part of 2015, then staff costs will raise for 2016. The WCC-EAA acts as a partner in the Norad project, that contract runs until the end of 2015. There is also therefore no continuity for 2016. There will be an application, but it is uncertain whether that will be approved. It is therefore important to continue to seek additional funding for 2016, and the income stream will be applied to cover the staffing. Finally, on infrastructure, in terms of accounting policies, if there are two full-time staff equivalents, then there would also be an increase in infrastructure.

EAA Board:

Dr Ulysses Burley III (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) offered his thanks for this report. He raised a question of clarification on what happened to the previous board of the EAA.

Dr Phiri noted that the previous board becomes the reference group up to 2017, and this is part of the memorandum of agreement. Dr Abuom asked if there was a reason behind this, since it was an integration. Dr Phiri noted that it was meant to provide continuity, particularly for funding partners. In addition to the reference group, there are also working groups, and these will also continue until 2017. It will be evaluated starting in 2017 and onwards. Dr Tveit noted that the composition of the reference group has not changed, however, the mandate has changed including the fact that the WCC is responsible for the work.

Diversity:

Dr Kasongo wanted to call attention to the diversity of people, which also needs to include people with disabilities, and noted that there are qualified people to serve in a variety of areas related to the EAA.

7.2.2 UPDATE ON WCC-ACT ALLIANCE PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES AND RELATIONAL POLICIES

Dr Phiri offered an update on WCC-ACT.

1. Introduction

In February 2011, the central committee received and approved the document *'Cooperation between WCC and ACT Alliance'* (GEN PRO 05) as a policy paper for the WCC on its relationship with ACT Alliance. The central committee also approved the request of the programme committee that the central committee request the general secretary and staff to develop capacity building in the area of diakonia in Africa in close cooperation with ACT Alliance.

As a follow up to the document *'Cooperation between WCC and ACT Alliance'* a memorandum of understanding was signed between WCC and ACT Alliance on sharing the Ecumenical UN Office in order to do advocacy at the UN in New York. The issues raised in the same document are reflected in the report of the *International Consultation on the Relationship between Churches and Specialised Ministries*, held in Malawi 4-10 September 2014 (EC Meeting, November 2014, Doc. No. 07) and its Summary Action points (EC Meeting, November 2014, Doc. No. 07.1) which was discussed at the executive committee meeting of November 2014. The programme sub-committee affirmed the idea of deeper cooperation and relationship between ACT Alliance, the fellowship of the WCC, and specialized ministries.

The programme sub-committee had noted that in the Malawi report, p. 3 under "Relationships" – "specific points of action" letters f. and h., needed further consideration and expressed concern about the language used e.g. "combined assemblies" and "report formally;" as opposed to "in conjunction" and "sharing," respectively.

a. The programme sub-committee had recommended that the executive committee: (a) continues to reflect on the Malawi report and discusses it further at the next meeting of the executive committee in the presence of a representative of ACT Alliance; (b) requests the general secretary to ensure that work on the study document on ecumenical diakonia proceeds as planned, building on previous documents on the topic of ecumenical diakonia, and (c) mandates the general secretary to work on recommendations from the Malawi report that have a direct impact on the WCC's programmatic activities and/or relational policies with ACT Alliance.

Since the November 2014 meeting of the WCC executive committee, the Malawi consultation report has been discussed by various staff groups from WCC, ACT Alliance and Lutheran World Federation in order to identify together areas for further cooperation (from planning, implementation and monitoring).

2. Role of the Council in the ecumenical movement

In the WCC-ACT Alliance relationship, the WCC *gives strategic leadership* to the ecumenical movement through:

- a convening role;
- providing the potential for a common voice;
- ensuring ecumenical cooperation, and offering accompaniment to churches in a spirit of ecumenical solidarity and mutual accountability; and
- fostering greater coherence in the ecumenical movement.

3. Strategic objectives

The WCC Strategic Plan objective which informs WCC relations with ACT Alliance is:

"The WCC has a strong and effective public voice in promoting justice and building peace through the accompaniment of member churches and ecumenical partners by doing advocacy on behalf of and with them at international and national levels."

4. Areas of cooperation revisited

a. Advocacy
    i. There is need to revisit the memorandum of understanding on advocacy at the UN in New York and on sharing the Ecumenical UN Office.
    ii. A matrix will be produced on the issues that WCC an ACT Alliance can work together or where one organisation can represent the other. Current areas of cooperation include:

1. Peace and security in priority countries
2. Gender justice
3. Religion and development
4. Post 2015 agenda and sustainable development

Cooperation in advocacy in Geneva needs to be strengthened. Areas to include:

i. CCIA
ii. Ecumenical Peace Advocacy Network (EPAN)
iii. development of child rights policy
iv. developing a generic MOU on how to cooperate on working in WCC priority countries, e.g. DRC and South Sudan
v. Religion and Development
vi. Priority areas of work on climate change to be revisited after COP 21
vii. WCC perspectives to ACT Advisory Group on Advocacy.

b. Diakonia

A staff-follow up group from WCC, ACT Alliance and Lutheran World Federation has been put in place to do the following:

i. Jointly develop a study document on ecumenical diakonia. The staff group to work with six people from the constituencies of WCC, ACT Alliance and LWF.
ii. Jointly develop tools and resources for understanding of ecumenical diakonia, ecumenism, and religion and development among relevant staff communities .

c. Joint policy development

The proposed creation of the Ecumenical Strategic Forum as a space for ecumenical cooperation is an opportunity to report on follow-up to the Malawi consultation; particularly the study on ecumenical diakonia and the learning exercise intended to strengthen the relationship between WCC, ACT Alliance and LWF.

d. Symbolic expression of unity

The general secretaries of the WCC and ACT Alliance requested a staff team to jointly look into pros and cons for the possibility of holding in conjunction ACT Alliance Assembly and WCC central committee meeting in 2018 and submit a document to the two general secretaries.

Methodology of working together

The WCC and ACT Alliance have changed in their working methods. Cooperation in planning and implementation to take into account:

a. Working with member churches and ecumenical partners;
b. Reduced staffing and financial realities;
c. Choosing limited overlapping interests of the two organisations;
d. Identification of areas of work where one organisation will take the lead with the support of the other organisation.

Where there is a mention of joint activities in the plans for 2016, there is need to show each other such plans before they are approved.

7.2.3 ACT ALLIANCE

Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima moderated a hearing session.

Dr Karen Nazaryan (ACT Alliance) spoke about ACT Alliance. He noted firstly that ACT mainly works in different kinds of forums. He shared that this work will have a global accompaniment group, and this will be done by the end of June. After that, there will be results for revision. Secondly, the

membership was discussed to give more attention to the membership from ecumenical organizations. In terms of the governing report from ACT, it was decided to sharpen the contributions from ACT. Now, they are planning to put these two things together.

He noted that this process is already taking place at the regional level. Here, we are really using a top-down approach.

The main priorities of ACT are:
- humanitarian aid
- development
- advocacy.

With the participation of churches, there will be a joint statement on ecumenical diakonia, and creation of a global partnership group.

7.3 ACTION ON THE REPORT OF THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Dr Abuom moderated a decision session. Dr Watkins presented the report of the programme sub-committee.

She began by thanking the sub-committee, and the staff, for their hard work.

7.3.1 GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation the general secretary's report and affirms the work of the general secretary and WCC staff in producing a document that clearly details our journey together in faith.

The programme sub-committee discussed with general secretary:
1. The critical financial situation of the WCC. The suggestion was made to provide more comprehensive financial reports that can be understood by the entire executive committee;
2. The revision of the 2015 budget after the drastic change in Swiss exchange rates. It was possible to develop a new budget with a deficit of approximately CHF 0.5 million. For the years 2016 and 2017 the situation will become more difficult as some of the savings in 2015 are not structural for the following years;
3. Whether the Council still has the capacity to continue playing its convening role considering the financial shortfall and reduction of staff. Convening requires a certain level of expertise in the areas in which the Council wants to play a significant role. In identifying these areas, it is important to be aware of the core mission of the Council and our way of working with partners to also assess the capacity of the Council;
4. The proposals made by the general secretary in his report on the themes for plenaries of the central committee;
5. Given that the pilgrimage of justice and peace reference group focus in 2016 might be on Israel-Palestine, one of the plenaries may concentrate on it;
6. An important issue in the context of the pilgrimage might be on religion and violence; however, too close of a connection between the two themes should be avoided as the conflict between Israel and Palestine is not primarily a religious conflict;
7. The need to reflect on an overall theme for the central committee and then see which plenaries are needed to support this overall theme. An overarching theme could be 'moving together in faith and responsibility'. This is also strongly related to the unity question: how are churches moving together? Similarly, the focus on children, youth and economic and ecological justice needs to be related to the overarching theme.

The sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to ask the general secretary:

to **reflect** further on an overarching theme for the central committee and proposals for plenaries for approval in the meeting of November 2015.

The executive committee was invited to make comments.

Metropolitan Gennadios noted that in point 7, there is already a notation about "moving together in faith and responsibility". He would like it to be communicated differently as: "moving together in faith and Christian unity". Dr Tveit shared that this can be discussed further and a decision made in November. Dr Watkins noted that this is part of on-going conversation, and further reflection on this will be done before November. Dr Abuom confirmed that the final formulation will be adopted in November 2015 at the next executive committee meeting. Metropolitan Gennadios reminded the group that the governance and nominations sub-committee was bringing a proposal for the plenaries of the central committee.

This recommendation was adopted by consensus.

7.3.2 WCC'S PROGRAMMATIC WORK: INTEGRATED, FOCUSED AND RESULT-ORIENTED

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation and affirmed the document and discussed the following:

1. The "learning" aspect could be formulated more strongly in the first strategic objective as well as "communication" in the fifth strategic objective;
2. The level of involvement of the executive committee itself in priority setting or whether the executive committee expects proposals from the general secretary and staff;
3. The pilgrimage needs to be more visible in the programmatic work of the Council without forcing all aspects of the Council's work into the model of the pilgrimage. The pilgrimage should be seen as a guiding principle which increasingly will shape the work of the Council; there is a dialectic relation between the pilgrimage as an overarching theme and the concrete expressions of the pilgrimage in projects and activities.

The programme sub-committee had a meeting with the finance sub-committee in which the financial parameters were discussed. Information was given making it clear that the Council cannot continue business as usual. This means that all projects need to be screened against the criteria for priority setting. If the financial situation requires that entire projects need to be discontinued, then proposals should be brought for approval to the executive committee in November 2015. It also might include that some activities or entire projects must be continued under the responsibility of or by member-churches or ecumenical partners. An example could be that the work on climate change is continued and coordinated by ACT Alliance while WCC concentrates only on one or two aspects of it.

The programme sub-committee recommends that the executive committee:

a. **approves** the five sets of "criteria for priority setting" to focus the programmatic work in the coming years;
b. **encourages** the general secretary and staff to make efforts to increase integration, articulation, visibility and clarity of the pilgrimage of justice and peace in the programmatic work;
c. **requests** the general secretary and staff develop a plan for 2016 for approval in the executive committee of November 2015 which is realistic from the perspective of finance and staffing, with proposals for discontinuing and merging projects and new ways of working for staff, including closer cooperation with member-churches and ecumenical partners.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

7.3.3 PILGRIMAGE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE REFERENCE GROUP REPORT

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation and affirmed the document and discussed the following:

1. The last recommendation of the document (Doc. No. 15, pg. 10, recommendation 16) in which it is proposed that each year has a specific thematic or regional focus or a combined focus of a region and a theme;
2. The refinement of the theme should be done in conversation with the region; member-churches and ecumenical partners in the region should be invited to articulate what is important in their context with regard to peace and justice;
3. The regional focus for coming years needs to be in line with the priority countries (Israel-Palestine, Syria, Iraq, South Sudan, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, the Korean Peninsula) as affirmed by the assembly and central committee;
4. The lack of involvement of youth on the PJP reference group (Doc. No. 15 pg. 5, recommendation 2). Increasing the size of the reference group has financial implications. On the other hand it is important to strengthen youth as actors in the ecumenical movement;
5. How feedback about the experiences of the member churches is received and communicated by the reference group. Three possible proposals are:
    a. members of the reference group report the ways in which the member churches in their region take up the pilgrimage of justice and peace;
    b. through the meeting of the ecumenical officers;
    c. using the pilgrimage website and other web tools (i.e. social media) as a possibility for feedback.

The programme sub-committee recommends that the executive committee:

a. **approves** that the pilgrimage of justice and peace (a) has an annual focus on a region, and (b) a corresponding thematic focus be developed in conversation with the member churches and ecumenical partners in that particular region;
b. **approves** that the PJP reference group formulates a proposal to be approved by the general secretary to invite representatives of ecumenical and confessional youth movements to the PJP reference group, provided that the organisations can cover the costs;
c. **approves** the general direction presented in the report of the PJP reference group including the aforementioned recommendations.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

Metropolitan Gennadios asked if it means that all sixteen recommendations of the reference group will be approved. Dr Watkins noted that the report of the reference group comes as advice to the general secretary, and the recommendations contained within the report are recommendations for the general secretary to consider.

Dr Abuom noted that the report of the PJP is not only coming to the general secretary but it is also coming to the executive committee. Metropolitan Gennadios felt that the general secretary needs the support and approval of the executive committee to deal with sixteen recommendations in total. Dr Watkins noted that some recommendations are already under way and some are appropriate for further discussion in November. For example, regarding the first recommendation to bring the leadership of commissions together, plans are already underway.

Regarding recommendation c with regard to interaction with commissions, Dr Abuom asked that the report of the general secretary to the next executive committee could name the ways in which these recommendations are being lived out.

Revised recommendation:

c. **approves** the general direction presented in the report of the PJP reference group including the aforementioned recommendations and asks the general secretary to bring back a report at the November 2015 executive committee for discussion and approval regarding the sixteen proposals presented in Doc. No. 15.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

7.3.4 PILGRIMAGE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE EMPHASIS ON ISRAEL/PALESTINE IN 2016

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation and affirmed the document and discussed the following:

1. The proposal of the PJP reference group to focus in 2016 on the conflict between Israel and Palestine;
2. The recommendation of the general secretary that the regional focus of 2016 be expanded to the Middle East, done in combination with a focus on peace-building or inter-religious dialogue and cooperation, keeping in mind that all conflicts in the Middle East are not necessarily religious conflicts;
3. A wider focus might be more difficult as the different conflicts in the Middle East, though inter-related, have different dynamics.
4. The focus should be on the conflict between Israel and Palestine, but in consultation with the member churches and ecumenical partners in the region about where further focus is needed on a specific concern or project related to the conflict;
5. Many international organisations are already present in Israel-Palestine and want to play a role in solving the conflicts, causing "hospitality fatigue" in the region;
6. The focus potentially be the Democratic Republic of Congo as the churches and partners need support in promoting justice and peace, while acknowledging the situation in South and North Sudan need urgent attention as well (in reference to Doc. No. 15.1 #3);
7. The focus in 2017 is not on one particular region but a specific theme which is relevant and urgent for several regions.

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

a. that the pilgrimage of justice and peace **focuses in 2016 on the conflict between Israel and Palestine**, provided that the PJP reference group further refines the thematic focus in consultation with the general secretary and the member churches and ecumenical partners in the region;
b. that the pilgrimage of justice and peace **focuses in 2017 on an African country** and that the PJP reference group is asked to develop a concrete proposal in consultation with the general secretary and the member churches and ecumenical partners in the region, using the criteria for priority setting, to be brought for approval to the executive committee of November 2015.

The general secretary noted that, since there is a focus on regions, if we only focus on Israel-Palestine, that might be seen as problematic. An alternative formulation of the recommendation might instead be: "That the PJP focuses in 2016 on the urgent situation in the Middle East, and particularly on the conflict between Israel and Palestine".

Dr Burley suggested that we add "to be brought for approval to the executive committee of November 2015".

Archbishop Vicken asked if it is the African continent or a specific country. Dr Watkins noted that there will be a focus on a specific African country. It will likely be Democratice Republic of Congo, Nigeria or South Sudan however more consultation is needed before making the decision.

Dr Gardner stated that if recommendation A on page 3 is accepted, then that it is inconsistent with the recommendation on page 4. He asked if we could refine the focus.

a. that the pilgrimage of justice and peace **focuses in 2016 on the urgent situation in the Middle East and particularly in Israel and Palestine**, provided that the PJP reference group further refines the thematic focus in consultation with the general secretary and the member churches and ecumenical partners in the region to be brought to approval to the executive committee of November 2015;

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

7.3.5 INTEGRATION OF WCC–ECUMENICAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation and affirmed the document and discussed the following:

1. Further work needs to be done on programmatic integration following the formal integration of EAA into WCC as WCC-EAA considering that the work on HIV and AIDS is now done in EHAIA and WCC-EAA, and that the two be integrated in a way that is complimentary and not competitive with each other;
2. A start to integration could be to bring EHAIA and the HIV and AIDS work of WCC-EAA under one reference group aiming at integration of the two;
3. The concern of the financial risks of the integration of EAA in WCC as the financial support to EAA has decreased, possibly resulting in the reduction of the staffing in WCC-EAA;
4. No staff is hired in permanent positions until the WCC-EAA funding allows it, but that interim solutions are maintained until that time;
5. New fundraising initiatives, such as consortium applications together with others, are undertaken.

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

a. to **approve the general direction** of the integration of EAA in the WCC as presented in the document Integration of WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (Doc. No. 16) taking into account the comments made by the programme sub-committee;
b. that the **general secretary and staff continue with the programmatic integration** taking into account the financial constraints and present to the executive committee in November 2015 clear information on the progress of integration, including staffing, and the options for the coming years.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

7.3.6 ECUMENICAL HIV AND AIDS INITIATIVES AND ADVOCACY PLAN OF ACTION

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation and affirmed the document and discussed the following:

1. The current version of the EHAIA Action Plan (Doc. No. 17) does not reflect integration with WCC-EAA as the document was developed before the integration of EAA into the WCC;
2. The widening of the scope of the work beyond Africa as affirmed by the 2016 central committee.

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

that an **updated version of the EHAIA Action Plan is presented to the executive committee in November 2015** in which the global perspective and the integration between EHAIA and the WCC-EAA are developed further.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

7.3.7 UPDATE ON WCC-ACT ALLIANCE PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES AND RELATIONAL POLICIES

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation and affirmed the document. They regretted that the representative of the ACT Alliance had to leave earlier and could not be present during the discussion in the programme sub-committee. It is important that the cooperation is discussed together as WCC and ACT Alliance.

After some discussion a **revised recommendation was proposed to the executive committee**:

> that, while affirming a closer cooperation between WCC and ACT Alliance, **action on the document Update on WCC-ACT Alliance Programmatic Activities and Relational Policies (Doc. No. 18) is not taken at this stage but referred to the meeting in November 2015** and that that the executive committee welcomes that ACT Alliance is preferably represented by its moderator or general secretary in the meetings of the executive committee in its entirety.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

7.3.8 CHURCHES ENGAGING FOR CHILDREN IN THE PILGRIMAGE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation and affirmed the document and discussed the following:

1. The initiative is also a follow up of the recommendation of the executive committee in its meeting in Cyprus, November 2014, to develop a stronger cooperation between the WCC and UNICEF;
2. The importance of the WCC safeguarding its own ecumenical values and ethos. In a partnership such as this it is important that we develop the projects with our own objectives, while affirming cooperation with UNICEF;
3. The concern raised in the previous executive committee that UNICEF expected a financial contribution from the WCC has been solved;
4. The drafting of memoranda between WCC and UNICEF is done in a way that our ecumenical ethos and values are included and safeguarded;
5. Moments of evaluation need to be included to assess how the WCC perspectives have been applied in the joint projects.

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

> that in the memorandum with UNICEF the **ecumenical ethos and values are explicitly highlighted as guiding principl**es for the planning and implementation of joint work and that scheduled evaluations include assessment of this approach.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

7.3.9 REPORTS FROM THE CONSULTATIVE AND ADVISORY BODIES

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation the reports from the consultative and advisory bodies.

There was a brief discussion on the report of the reference group on human sexuality. Metropolitan Nifon noted that we should not refer to the documents on human sexuality in a special way. There were several documents from consultative and advisory groups that the programme sub-committee worked with. He thought that the initial intention was to emphasize the broadness of human sexuality.

Yet, the report of the group was as if it was only about sexual orientation. We discussed this in Cyprus. We need to have the reports of both the gender advisory group and the human sexuality group together. We need to debate this properly, and see the ways in which we can move forward with certain proposals.

Archpriest Mikhail Goundiaev (Russian Orthodox Church [Moscow Patriarchate]) shared that we need to have a very profound discussion about this. He echoed that the broadness of human sexuality needs to be represented.

Dr Watkins noted that they could all be referred to November 2015. She would be happy to receive the reports for information, and then in November 2015 to look more carefully at each one of them in a more appropriate way. Dr Tveit noted that what is said here can be heard, and can be taken into consideration for the discussion in November 2015.

After some discussion the programme sub-committee presented a revised recommendation to the executive committee:

> to **receive** the reports of the consultative and advisory bodies for information and to **refer** detailed discussions on the reports to its meeting in November 2015.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

7.3.10 COMMUNICATIONS REPORT 2015

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation and affirmed the document and discussed the following:

1. It is helpful to know not only how many people have read the communications material, but also who is reading it;
2. Communication is well received and helps to strengthen the fellowship and its visibility;
3. A new, more up-to-date communications strategy is needed and is an important aspect of the pilgrimage of justice and peace.

Metropolitan Gennadios asked if updates and more clarity would be given in November 2015. Dr Quawas asked that it be a recommendation.

The programme sub-committee **recommends** to the executive committee that an up-to-date communications strategy is presented in the November 2015 meeting of the executive committee.

This was approved by consensus.

7.3.11 SUMMARY PROGRAMME REPORTS 2014

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation and affirmed the document and discussed the fact that the format of the summary is helpful. It gives a full overview without being overwhelmed by details. The programme sub-committee sees this as a good format for presenting the plans for 2016.

Dr Tveit noted that the summary reports were presented for approval. Dr Watkins recommended reception rather than approval. She shared that it was presented only briefly in the course of the plenary, and the executive committee did not have adequate time to offer their input into this. However, if the executive committee feels that we are ready to approve this, then the sub-committee would be happy. The current format of the 2014 reports gives the information needed to give approval. The fuller 300 pages are also available with detailed and adequate information.

Dr Abuom noted then that we could appreciate the content and approve the format of the report. Dr Quawas clarified that we approve the format, but not the content of the report.

The recommendation was:

to **appreciate and approve** the format in which the report was presented and **receive** the reports 2014.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

7.3.12 NOTE ON PROCEDURE

It was noted that some documents were not presented in full (i.e. Summary Programme Reports 2014, Doc. No. 07) to the plenary before referring to the programme sub-committee.

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

in the future, **all documents are presented and discussed in the plenary** with an invitation to bring comments to the programme sub-committee.

This was approved by consensus.

7.3.13 ECUMENICAL ACCOMPANIMENT PROGRAMME IN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL (EAPPI)

Dr Quawas noted that there is nothing in the programme report referring to the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). Dr Watkins shared that they did not receive documentation of a particular nature about EAPPI. In the programme sub-committee they discussed the materials that were provided for. They did not address the EAPPI because it did not come through the usual channels to engage the work.

Dr Tveit shared that there are no lines of reporting for EAPPI. There is constant attention to the programme on a regular basis, even though there was no report to the executive committee.

Dr Abuom noted that the staff leadership group is aware of concerns related to the EAPPI. Dr Quawas put on the table that he would like to have EAPPI discussed. Problems that are present in the programme should be resolved. He believes that there will be good news reported about this programme in the future.

Dr Abuom noted that there are some administrative issues that are handled at the management level, and we are supposed to bring concerns to leaders and management.

The report of the programme sub-committee was approved by consensus.

8. Public Issues

8.1 FIRST PRESENTATION ON PUBLIC ISSUES

Bishop Swenson led a hearing session. She began the session with prayer.

H.E. Metropolitan Nifon of Targoviste offered an overview of the public issues. There were two documents for the executive committee to consider: the Draft Statement on the Centenary of the

Armenian Genocide and the Draft Statement on Responses to Migrant Crises. Any feedback on these documents can be received in writing within the next 24 hours. He reminded members of the executive committee about the methodology for adopting public issues. The document "Actions on Public Issues" (Appendix VI) was presented for information.

8.2 SECOND PRESENTATION ON PUBLIC ISSUES

Dr Abuom moderated a hearing session.

Metropolitan Nifon read the revised version of the "Draft statement of the Centenary of the Armenian genocide". The executive committee was invited to offer comments on the statement.

Comments from the executive committee were received as follows:

- Dr Quawas noted the importance that the Pope recognized the genocide and Dr Enns added that the two quotations of the Pope could be brought together in the document in one place.
- Metropolitan Gennadios noted that this sounded as a statement that comes from the United Nations with little or no spiritual or church language. He suggested to end the statement with a call to states who still do not recognize this as genocide. *Metanoia* or repentance should be called for. It is both to avoid new genocides, but also to repent for acts committed in the past.
- Dr Tveit suggested beginning the statement with the context in which we are meeting. The martyrs should be honoured and the life of Armenian people today should be celebrated, naming also the Christian family of saints. A different quotation from him as general secretary should be included. In the statement it will be important to acknowledge that the WCC was part of the events in Armenia and witnessed to the commemoration.
- Dr Quawas thanked the general secretary and recommended that we remove the general secretary's quote; the substance and content can be used without quoting him directly.
- Archbishop Vicken asked if it is the policy of the WCC to make reference to future engagements of the general secretary of the WCC as his upcoming visit to Antelias, Lebanon.
- Archbishop Nareg noted that not to mention the events in Antelias, Lebanon, means that the statement will be one-sided. The survivors of the genocide need to be named. There are many events that will continue to take place in the diaspora. One of them is the Antelias event. There will be commemoration of our people in diaspora and in the Middle East: they are the survivors of the genocide. For this reason there is a symbolic meaning.
- Dr Tveit noted that the whole picture would be completed by including the Antelias. The wording could be something like, "the WCC along with its member churches will participate in events in Antelias, Lebanon".

The public issues sub-committee agreed to further revise the document based on this feedback.

8.3 THIRD PRESENTATION ON PUBLIC ISSUES

8.3.1 DRAFT STATEMENT ON THE CENTENARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE, FIRST REVISION

Metropolitan Nifon introduced the revised "Draft Statement on the Centenary of the Armenian Genocide". Mr Peter Prove presented the document.

Comments:

- Archbishop Nareg suggested that the first line be modified to read: "the Armenian genocide perpetuated by the Ottoman Empire". Archbishop Vicken agreed that the perpetuators should be included. Dr Quawas proposed that we add "the Ottoman Empire (Turkey)". The general secretary noted that referring to the Armenian genocide is important, but the whole history of the

genocide does not need to be told in this statement. The executive committee decided by consensus to add "Ottoman Empire", but not Turkey.

- Archbishop Vicken asked for clarification about the word Aramean. He noted that Aramean is a group that includes Syrians and many others. Mr Prove offered clarification. He shared that it comes from the minutes of the 10th Assembly in Busan, with the addition of the reference of Syrians. We will honour the many Christians from Aramean, Chaldean, Syrian, Assyrian and Greek descent. It was agreed to keep this part of the statement as it is.
- Several other text changes were suggested by executive committee members.
- Metropolitan Gennadios noted that there are two biblical references and wondered about putting them in the beginning. Mr Prove shared that this draft incorporates the written proposals so far. The executive committee could give the mandate to the leadership of the central committee to decide what biblical references should be included in the statement.

8.3.2 CYPRUS, ISRAEL-PALESTINE, AND RACISM IN USA, FIRST READING

Metropolitan Nifon introduced three paragraphs prepared by the public issues sub-committee. The executive committee was then invited to make comments and questions.

Dr Quawas suggested adding the word "illegal" to the section on Israel-Palestine, so that it reads "expanded illegal settlement activity in the Occupied Territories".

As to the wording on Cyprus, he would suggest that we change "division" to "occupation". Mr Prove suggested to keep division and add "occupation", so that it would say "to end division of the island resulting from occupation". Metropolitan Gennadios stated that for Greek Cypriots, the country is still occupied. He would therefore disagree with the change. We want to end the occupation which has created division.

Archbishop Nareg shared that the sentence that they have is referring to the UN special advisor. It is a quote from someone else, and not our own writing. We cannot put words in someone else's mouth.

It was agreed to bring the executive committee a revised draft.

8.3.3 DRAFT STATEMENT ON RESPONSES TO MIGRANT CRISIS, FIRST READING

The public issues sub-committee received and reviewed a draft statement on responses to migrant crises, based on a proposal by CCIA. In addition to CCIA, the draft already incorporated input from the Churches' Commission on Migration in Europe (CCME), as well as from some specialized ministries (particularly ICCO and Christian Aid).

Dr Abuom reminded everyone that according to the "Procedures for Dealing with Public Issues", people had an opportunity to submit their comments in writing prior to this moment.

The general secretary asked that the biblical quotation come to the beginning of the document. Secondly, he suggested that the statement recognize the enormous efforts that ships, boats, and sea ferries have taken to rescue people when they have been at sea, in order to affirm and recognize them. The executive committee agreed to these changes by consensus.

Metropolitan Gennadios asked if we should be more sensitive – and stronger – in terms of what is requested from European countries and the European Union. The situation is a difficult one: some governments do not have the infrastructure to receive people every day from different parts of the world while some other countries have completely closed their doors to migrants. He also noted that it would be helpful to add something about "illegal migrants".

Metropolitan Nifon stated that they had good discussion about all of these. This is a general statement, and we cannot go into all details. The text does mention illegal migrants, but in the recommendations too they could also add "the legal migration of people and proper care taken in case of illegal immigrants".
Dr Abuom shared that there are two key points: firstly, the care of illegal immigrants, and secondly, the support for the two receiving nations: Greece and Italy.

Mr Prove said that the sub-committee would need to reflect on these comments further, and bring a revised version back for adoption.

8.4 ACTION ON THE REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ISSUES COMMITTEE

Dr Abuom moderated a decision session. Metropolitan Nifon presented the report.

8.4.1 ACTIONS ON PUBLIC ISSUES

The public issues sub-committee reviewed the summary of Actions on Public Issues (see Appendix VI) and referred it to the executive committee for information.

8.4.2 STATEMENT ON THE CENTENARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE, SECOND REVISION

The public issues sub-committee noted that they received and considered a draft statement on the centenary of the Armenian genocide, which had previously been reviewed by the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) for presentation to the executive committee. In finalizing the draft text, the public issues sub-committee had especially benefitted from the perspectives and recommendations of representatives of the Armenian Apostolic Church, H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian and H.G. Archbishop Nareg Alemezian.

The revised statement was adopted by consensus.

The adopted revised statement (see Appendix VII) was read publicly at the Armenian Genocide Memorial on 10 June 2015.

8.4.3 STATEMENT ON RESPONSES TO MIGRANT CRISES

Metropolitan Nifon presented the revised report.

The revised statement was approved by consensus. The statement is in Appendix VIII.

8.4.4 CYPRUS, ISRAEL-PALESTINE AND RACISM IN USA

Mr Prove presented the revised report and outlined the changes that had been made to the document:

The full report of the public issues sub-committee was approved by consensus. The report is in Appendix VIII.

9. Staffing, Personnel, and Nominations

9.1 First Presentation on Nominations

Metropolitan Gennadios moderated a hearing session. He noted that there were several items for discussion.

9.1.1 Mid-Term Election of the Executive Committee: A Discussion Starter

Mr Georges Lemopoulos presented the document on the mid-term election of the executive committee for consideration, and not for a final decision at this time. The executive committee will need to make a clear proposal to the central committee at its meeting in June 2016. The purpose of conversation at this time will be to set the process and the timelines over the upcoming executive committee meetings.

Introduction

The amended WCC Rules stipulate (for the first time in the history of the WCC) two election processes for the executive committee between assemblies.

According to Rule VI. 6., the election of the "second executive committee" should take place during the meeting of the central committee in Trondheim, Norway, June 2016. This will allow the "second executive committee" to begin serving as of January 2018. The reason for such an early election is due to the fact that the central committee meeting in June 2016 is the one "that immediately precedes the end of the four-year term of the first executive committee".

There will be four meetings of the executive committee before the central committee in June 2016:

1. June 2015, Armenia
2. November 2015, Switzerland
3. April 2016, China
4. June 2016, Norway.

The proposal comes to the executive committee for three reasons:

a. This being the first time to have such an election (and a move to a new ethos), it would be appropriate to pay particular attention to the whole process.
b. Although the ultimate responsibility for preparing nominations for all committees (including the executive committee) remains with the Governance and Nominations Committee of the central committee, the executive committee should do the preparatory work and bring proposals to the central committee. This argument is based on the recent experience with the election of consultative bodies. It was admitted that the executive committee should have studied and processed the latest slates with nominees prior to the central committee.
c. Though there seems to be ample time, it would be effective to initiate the process now so that consultation among members of the executive committee and with member churches can take place, consensus be reached and, thus, the usual tensions around election processes be avoided.

The compulsory constitutional frame (WCC Rules) and the discretionary provisions (Supplement to the Rules) will guide the process as given by the WCC Rule VI.6 and the Supplement to the WCC Rules: The Central Committee – Guidelines for Mid-term Election.

Expected actions

The executive committee is invited to:

a. set the process and the timelines for the mid-term elections;
b. encourage confessional and/or regional (sub-regional) groups of the executive committee (and if necessary of the central committee) to make proposals;
c. identify cases where further consultation with member churches might be needed;
d. consider the possibility of making its own proposals in case the targets are not met through consultation.

Dr Quawas asked about the negotiation with churches. He noted that the central committee has a mandate to elect executive committee members from the already-elected central committee members. Only the churches that are part of the central committee will have a say, but we cannot open the door widely for broad consultation with all churches in the fellowship.

Mr Lemopoulos shared that when nominations to the central committee came from member churches, then some churches indicated that its nominee would also be nominated to the executive committee. Dr Quawas noted that churches would name who they would like on the central committee and the executive committee, but only as a guideline. We will need to go back to the rules to see if the general secretary can propose the names.

Mr Lemopoulos noted that there were churches that made collective proposals before elections. The Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches, churches in the Nordic counties, and churches in the USA worked collectively on their nominations. There were also some churches who already shared that they would like to replace one name with another, based on consultations with the churches. Further, we are not speaking of only rotating churches, but also changing persons. It may well be that we want to keep some churches on the executive committee, but make a proposal to replace with another person from the same church from the central committee. In such cases, some discussions with the church will be helpful.

Dr Abuom pleaded with the nominations sub-committee and the whole executive committee to find a good process that will help us exercise our mandate and for the central committee to work in a way that builds up the fellowship and does not bring about division. She invited the committee to focus on the process that will help us to make the transition as smooth, as participatory, and as engaging as possible with all of the dignity that it requires.

9.1.2 NOMINATIONS

Ecumenical Trust Board

The executive committee was informed that the general secretary had named Bishop Mary Ann Swenson to the Ecumenical Trust Board on behalf of the WCC.

Commission on Ecumenical Education and Formation – By-Laws

At its meeting in February 2014 the commission on EEF worked on the by-laws and produced an updated version for the approval of the central committee (see Doc. No. 10.1).

The executive committee is requested to endorse the by-laws and forward them to the central committee meeting in June 2016 for decision.

Central Committee

On 2 December 2014 Rev. Alexander Vasyutin (M/O) resigned from the WCC central committee. The church put forward the name of Mr Artem Borzov to replace him (M/L/Y). Archpriest Mikhail

Goundiaev noted that sadly, Mr Artem Borzov had passed away on 5 June, 2015 while he was on vacation. He was a former Bossey student. Fr Mikhail invited prayers for his family.

It was noted that another replacement will be needed from the Russian Orthodox Church, to be considered at the executive committee meeting in November 2015.

9.2 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Mr Lemopoulos presented the membership matters. He noted the following.

General information

Appropriate communication has been ensured with the three member churches whose application for membership in the WCC was accepted in the last central committee meeting.

1. Dutch Reformed Church, South Africa
2. Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Blantyre Synod (CCAP Blantyre Synod), Malawi
3. Council of Baptist Churches in Northeast India (CBCNEI)

Special attention has been given to introduce them to the WCC fellowship.

New applications for membership

There are three applications for membership in the WCC which, in principle, meet the criteria and were submitted to the WCC general secretary:

a. Africa Brotherhood Church, Kenya [African Instituted Churches]
b. Baptist Community at Central Africa (Communauté Baptiste au Centre de l'Afrique), Democratic Republic of Congo [Baptist], and
c. The Presbyterian Church of Laos [Reformed].

These applications are ready to be presented to the Permanent Committee for Consensus and Collaboration for further discernment.

In response to a question, Metropolitan Gennadios clarified that it is within the mandate of the Permanent Committee for Consensus and Collaboration to discuss membership matters. Dr Quawas read from the Rule IX 6. Mr Lemopoulos noted that there is no explicit reference to membership matters, but the membership is implied. The first part of the mandate is to "continuing the authority, mandate, concerns and dynamic of the Special Commission" (mandated by the Eighth Assembly, Harare, Zimbabwe, 1998). He shared that one of the first concerns was about membership in the WCC, and one of the chapters in the special commission's report was on membership. It was on the recommendation of the permanent committee that the rule on membership was amended. This is a way of continuing the conversation with the permanent committee before an application for membership goes to the central committee for final decisions. The permanent committee acts as a sounding board.

It was agreed that, with this clarification, the report would go to the sub-committee for further conversation.

Kimbanguist Church

The Ecumenical Accompaniment Group with the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth on His Special Envoy Simon Kimbangu will meet from 29 November to 3 December 2015. A second meeting is planned for the first part of 2016, so that a progress report could be presented to the WCC central committee in 2016.

The programme and agenda of the first meeting is being prepared in collaboration with the moderator of the group and with the ecumenical officer of the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth on His Special Envoy Simon Kimbangu.

9.3 STAFFING AND OTHER MATTERS

Dr Abuom moderated a closed decision session. Ms Kopecká opened the session with prayer.

9.3.1 APPOINTMENT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FAITH AND ORDER

The general secretary shared that right after the Rev. Canon Dr John Gibaut announced his resignation from his position as the Director of Faith and Order and his appointment to a new position in the Anglican Communion, the general secretary consulted the moderator of the Commission on Faith and Order, Rev. Dr Susan Durber, about the process of recruiting a successor. He discussed with her the extra-ordinary situation that the Faith and Order leadership has an advisory role in recruiting a new director while the Commission did not yet have the opportunity to select its own leadership. He appreciated the Commission's decision to agree with the moderator's proposal to form an interim leadership group, instead of postponing the selection of a new director till after its first meeting.

The general secretary asked the deputy general secretary, Mr Georges Lemopoulos, and the associate general secretary for Unity, Mission and Ecumenical Relations, Rev. Dr Hielke Wolters, to work with the interim leadership group of the Commission on Faith and Order to draft a role description and vacancy notice for the new director and to start the recruitment process.

At the deadline of 15 March eighteen applications were received. To ensure more applications from women and the global south, in mutual consultation it was decided to extend the deadline until 28 April. This resulted in a doubling of the number of applicants providing a wide range of applications with rich and varied experience from many traditions and regions.

The interim leadership team, together with the deputy general secretary and the associate general secretary shortlisted five candidates and then held interviews on 29 May. Of the five candidates one withdrew the application for personal reasons and another candidate could not be interviewed for health reasons and lack of a church endorsement letter. The general secretary had individual meetings with each of the three candidates and met later with the interview panel to jointly reach a conclusion about the results of the interviews. The three candidates met also with Faith and Order staff members, and the opinion of the staff was included in reaching the final conclusions.

The panel and the general secretary were unanimously convinced that out of the three candidates, Rev. Dr Odair Pedroso Mateus was by far the best candidate for the position of director of Faith and Order. In the interview with the panel and in the conversation with the general secretary he showed a wealth of experience and a rich knowledge relevant for the work of Faith and Order. His broad knowledge of the ecumenical movement, including his teaching experience at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, will help him to strengthen the role of Faith in Order in the World Council of Churches and beyond.

The general secretary noted that he is also confident that with the appointment of Dr Mateus that they were are able to include a wider regional perspective into the leading staff of the World Council of Churches.

With the support and positive advice of the interim leadership of the Commission on Faith and Order, he therefore wholeheartedly recommends that the executive committee appoints Rev. Dr Odair Pedroso Mateus (Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil) as the new director of Faith and Order.

It was noted that this would be the first time that a director of Faith and Oder is being appointed from the global south. It was noted that he is an experienced ecumenist, a professor at Bossey, and has good skills as a teacher of ecumenism.

The name of Rev. Prof Dr Odair Pedroso Mateus was approved as the new Director of Faith and Order; this was approved by consensus.

9.3.2 STAFF ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Departures

A. The following staff members have left the services of the Council since the last executive committee meeting:

- Ms Corinne Ott, Financial Business Manager, House Services, Roman Catholic, France, on 30 November 2014 (departure by mutual agreement).
- Ms Tara Tautari Barua, Special Advisor – Staff Development and Organizational Learning, Methodist, New Zealand, on 31 December 2014 (completion of years of service).
- Mr Mark Beach, Communications Director, Mennonite, United States of America, on 31 December 2014 (resignation).
- Mr Charles Klagba, EHAIA Consultant for francophone Africa, Methodist, Togo, on 31 December 2014 (end of contract).
- Mr Alain Meuwly, Hospitality and Finance Manager, Roman Catholic, Switzerland, on 31 January 2015 (termination of contract).
- Rev. Canon Dr John Gibaut, Director for Faith and Order, Anglican, Canada, on 28 February 2015 (resignation).
- Mr Louis-Blaise Nzonzi, House Services Administrator, Roman Catholic, Congolese, on 30 April 2015 (termination of contract).

B. The following staff members will leave in the next months the services of the Council after the executive committee meeting:

- Mr Jonathan Frerichs, Programme Executive for Peace Building, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Commonwealth Protected Person, on 16 May 2015 (retirement).
- Ms Christina Papazoglou, Programme Executive for Peace Building, Ecumenical Patriarchate, Greece, on 30 June 2015 (end of contract).
- Ms Maria Van Heemstra, Project Assistant, Presbyterian Church, United States of America, on 30 June 2015 (departure by mutual agreement).
- Ms Erika Grandi, German Translator, Protestant Church of Geneva, Switzerland, on 30 June 2015 (end of short term contract).
- Mr Albin Hillert, Intern at the Communication Department, Lutheran, Swedish, on 17 July 2015 (end of internship).
- Ms Maria Baile Rubio, Project Assistant, Roman Catholic, Spain, on 31 December 2015 (departure by mutual agreement).
- Ms Heather Stunt, Receptionist, Church of England, United Kingdom, on 31 October 2015 (retirement).

Arrivals

A. The following staff members have assumed their responsibilities:

- Ms Marianne Ejdersten, Director of Communication, Church of Sweden, on 1 February 2015.

- Mr Roshan Rajaratne, Contributions Accountant, Roman Catholic, Sri Lanka, on 1 February 2015.
- Mr Matias Ikkala, intern for Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland, on 1 February 2015.
- Dr Susan Purcell-Gilpin, Programme Consultant for Health and Healing, Baptist, Zimbabwe, 1 February 2015.
- Mr Albin Hillert, Intern for Communication, Church of Sweden, on 17 February 2015.
- Ms Erika Grandi, German Translator, Protestant Church of Geneva, on 20 April 2015.
- Ms Géraldine Rambaud, Customer Service Assistant in Bossey, France, on 1 May 2015.

B. The following staff members have been appointed by the general secretary:

- Ms Nadia Conti, Temporary Archives Assistant, Roman Catholic, Swiss, from 20 July 2015 to 20 January 2016 (maternity leave replacement).
- Dr KatalinaTahaafe-Williams, Programme Executive Mission and Evangelism – Indigenous Peoples and Migrant Communities, Uniting Church in Australia, Australia, to begin her functions on 1 October 2015.

The following position still has a vacancy:
- Assistant Editor for Publications

9.3.3 CHANGES IN THE STAFF RULES AND REGULATIONS

In March 2015 the general secretary, in consultation with the staff leadership group, decided to implement new staff regulations, with effective date on 1 October 2015, in order to adjust the budget following the unexpected decision of the Swiss National Bank to abandon its strategic support for the Euro/CHF rate.

The following three aspects were adjusted:

a) Provision for long service bonus is cancelled. The correspondent provision at the year end, valued CHF433’600 on 31 December 2014 will disappear.
b) The number of annual days to be carried forward to the following year was reduced from fifteen to five. The purpose is to reduce the mandatory provision at the year end from CHF 498’000 to CHF 214’000.
c) Travel compensation days to be taken within ten days after return to work instead of 40 days and no travel compensation days can be carried forward to the following year. This change will allow the disappearance of a provision of CHF 45’000.

All staff members have agreed to continue to serve the Council under the new conditions of employment.

Bishop Opoko expressed appreciation to the general secretary. He noted that the general secretary has already taken proactive steps for some of the issues that they have dealt with in the finance sub-committee.

9.4 ACTION ON THE REPORT OF THE STAFFING, PERSONNEL, AND NOMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr Abuom moderated a decision session. H.E. Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima presented the report.

9.4.1 GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

The sub-committee received with great appreciation the report of the general secretary. It noted that given the report's richness in content and reflection, the executive committee members would benefit by receiving it at least one week in advance of the meeting in order to carefully read and reflect on it.

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee affirmed the general secretary's proposed topics for the thematic plenaries during the 2016 central committee, and **recommends that the plenary themes be:**

1. Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace
2. Christian Faith and Unity
3. Religion and Violence
4. Challenges of Children and Youth of Today
5. Middle East

It was noted that on 29 June 2016, many churches will celebrate the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul. On this morning, there could be a Divine Liturgy in which central and executive committee members could share to commemorate this feast day.

Finally, the sub-committee reviewed and discussed the tentative timetable for the central committee meeting, noting that a more developed timetable will come to the November 2015 executive committee meeting for review and comment.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

9.4.2 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

The sub-committee received the report for information, noting and affirming the processes currently being followed related to the three churches whose applications have been accepted at the last central committee as well as the three additional churches whose application for membership will be submitted to the central committee in June 2016.

Regarding the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by His Special Envoy Simon Kimbangu (Kimbanguist Church), the sub-committee heard about the upcoming meetings of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Group addressing this membership matter and affirmed the plan. It was reported that the representative of the church has raised a protocol question, asking the WCC to address all formal communications to the head of the church rather than the ecumenical officer. The sub-committee affirms this request of the church and encourages staff to observe this protocol, particularly given the sensitivities involved in this process with this particular member church. Reports from the two consultations will be submitted to the April 2016 executive committee meeting.

Dr Tveit noted that our colleagues in Geneva are following the protocol already. Dr Kasongo shared that the church in question has received the email, and so they are following protocol.

9.4.3 NOMINATIONS

The sub-committee received the nominations report as information, noting again with sadness the recent accidental death of Mr Artem Borzov, whom the Russian Orthodox Church had proposed as a replacement member to the WCC central committee. There is the expectation that another name from the church will come to the executive committee at a later time.

The sub-committee affirmed the general secretary's naming of Bishop Mary Ann Swenson to the Ecumenical Trust Board as a WCC representative.

Regarding the Commission on Ecumenical Education and Formation By-Laws, the staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee **recommends the following changes** to the text and refers them back to the commission for its reaction and eventual submission to the central committee for its approval:

> 2.1 – In the quoting of Article III of the Constitution, the line from the preamble, "In seeking *koinonia* in faith and life, witness and service, the churches through the Council will" be added
> 2.2 – should read, "...in collaboration with member churches, churches, ecumenical partners, academic institutions, and networks"
> 2.2.3 – should read, "...helping churches and their congregations..."
> 3.1 – change "appoint" to "elect"
> 3.2 – full stop after central committee, deleting the text which follows in that point
> 3.4 – change "consultants" to "advisors"
> 4.2 – add "or executive committee"
> 5.2 – The language could be the same as that of the Faith and Order commission by-laws in this regard, "In consultation with his or her nominating body a member of the commission may name a person to represent him or her at any meeting at which the member is unable to be present."
> 5.3 – change "consultant" to "advisor"
> 5.4 – should read, "A quorum for the conduct of any business by the commission shall be one-half of its membership."

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

9.4.4 PLANNING FOR FUTURE GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS

The sub-committee received this document as information, noting particularly the timeline specific to the preparatory process for the next assembly given that the central committee now only meets every second year.

It also discussed the 10-16 April 2016 executive committee meeting tentatively approved for China, noting that it will take place in Nanjing, contingent upon official assurances by the time of the meeting of the leadership of the central committee (end of September 2015) that all executive committee members will be granted visas to attend the meeting.

9.4.5 MID-TERM ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The sub-committee discussed at length the process for mid-term elections of the executive committee, noting that there must be a clear process and timeline in place in order to avoid unnecessary difficulties. It noted that further discussion and consultation among executive committee members at the November 2015 and April 2016 executive committee meetings can be helpful to the process. Such a process could include various elements, e.g.

a. Those executive committee members who will not stand for a second term are invited to discuss this with the general secretary.
b. Those regional, national or confessional groupings who discuss among themselves nomination processes and make collective proposals are encouraged to do so and share the results of their discussions with the general secretary.
c. For groupings not covered under point b, the general secretary could consult with members of the executive committee coming from the same region about potential solutions.
d. The general secretary will report on the progress of this process to the executive committee meetings.

It was affirmed that the final decision regarding the composition of the next executive committee belongs to the central committee. Any advance work will only aid the governance and nominations committee of the central committee in its work.

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee **recommends** that the executive committee:

a. set the process and the timelines for the mid-term elections;
b. encourage confessional and/or regional (sub-regional) groups of the executive committee (and if necessary of the central committee) to make proposals;
c. identify cases where further consultation with member churches might be needed;
d. consider the possibility of making its own proposals in case the targets are not met through consultation.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

The whole report of the staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee was approved by consensus.

10. Future Central Committee and Executive Committee Meetings

Dr Abuom moderated a general session. She noted that the dates of the upcoming meetings are:

- 13-18 November 2015, arrivals on 12/11 and departures on 18 or 19/11
  Venue: Geneva (Bossey), Switzerland
- 10-16 April 2016, arrivals on 9/4 and departures on 17/4
  Venue: Nanjing, China (this venue contingent on receiving assurance of visas for executive committee members before the location is confirmed)
- 18-23 November 2016, arrivals on 17/11 and departures on 23 or 24/11
  Venue: Geneva (Bossey), Switzerland
- 10-16 May 2017, arrivals on 9/5 and departures on 16 or 17/5
  Venue: Amman, Jordan (to be confirmed)
- 17-22 November 2017, arrivals 16/11 and departures on 22 or 23/11
  Venue: Geneva (Bossey), Switzerland

Dr Abuom reminded the executive committee that if executive members are un able to attend, then it is possible to send a proxy from the central committee instead. The hope is that this will not become the practice; however, it is possible to do this.

11. Closing Actions

Dr Abuom moderated a general session.

11.1 EVALUATION OF THE MEETING

Dr Abuom invited people to consider what has touched them to think about as they leave the executive committee meeting. She invited people to share their general impressions. The executive committee completed their evaluation forms of the meeting. The committee was also asked to consider how people who left early could be part of the evaluation process.

The executive committee was invited to share general impressions.

- Dr Quawas shared that items of the agenda should come first, and visit and excursions should be outside of the working time. During this meeting, difficulties in understanding his colleagues because of acoustic problems.
- Dr Kasongo expressed her appreciation for this meeting. She noted that this space was sometimes difficult for her. She thanked everyone for their support of her and for accompanying her. She especially thanked the deacons who helped her to move around. She was challenged by the visit to the medical centre. She asked herself why they could not also do those things at home.
- Archbishop Nareg shared his gratefulness to H.H. Karekin II. The Catholicos spent as much time as he could with the committee, and briefed it on what the church is experiencing under his leadership. He wished that we had more time for interaction with local parishes. He believes that we could have done this better; it would have been important for us to be with the faithful.
- Bishop Opoko also would have liked more interaction with the local church community. He wondered if in twos or threes we could be engaged and distributed among different churches for worship. He noted that liturgies should not only be from the place where we are, but other places from around the world too. Finally, he read all of the documents, but issues regarding EDAN were totally absent. There is frustration as it seems as if EDAN is isolated from all other issues.
- Bishop Swenson thought it was very significant that we were able to be there and to support the Armenian people in commemorating the genocide and to experience a symbol of our Christian unity. This was a station in our pilgrimage of justice and peace. The times when we were able to model this was very significant.
- Metropolitan Gennadios noted that every time that executive committee meets outside Geneva the committee experiences warm hospitality. It is a matter of pride that member churches of the WCC are willing to host meetings and to offer the maximum they can. In hosting us, member churches want to let us know about their local situation. In this meeting the local hosts worked hard to provide for all the needs of the meeting and the committee is very grateful to all of them. He added that the staff had done a great job and were to be thanked as well. The executive meetings need a great deal of preparation.
- Dr Ayenew thanked the executive committee. The mood was wonderful. He also offered thanks to H.H. Karekin II for his most wonderful hospitality and for his wonderful leadership.
- Archbishop Vicken thanked the leadership of the central committee. He prayed that God will give them more strength and wisdom in order to continue the future mission for the churches and communities.

11.2 APPRECIATIONS

The moderator offered thanks to all of the following for their work at this meeting

- H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian, for all of his preparations
- the minute-taker, Ms Adele Halliday
- the consensus facilitator, Ms Tara Tautari Barua.

The general secretary offered thanks. He also offered additions about paragraphs he skipped in his report. He appreciated the spirit of the meeting and felt that this is how WCC should be. There is a strong sense that we are on a life-long journey. This is a measure of our work. He thanked all the participants.

Additional words of thanks and appreciations were offered to all of the following:

- H.H. Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians
- Archbishop Nathan, director of external relations
- Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Director, Inter-Church Relations Department
- Ms Gohar Ghalachyan, PA to the director and translator, Inter-Church Relations Department
- The four deacons in the Inter-Church Relations Department:

    - Deacon Grigor
    - Deacon Adranik
    - Deacon Sargis
    - Deacon Edgar
- Archibishop Datev Sarkissian and Dr Armen Charchyan, chief of surgery; Izmirlian Medical Centre
- Mr Mirijanian, director of the Nakashyan Children's Home (Mer Hooys – House of Hope)
- Very Rev Fr Komitas Hounanyan, director of the Etchmiadzin Youth Centre, the gifted youth, their teachers, families and all who support them
- The very gracious hosts of the various dinners and times of fellowship during our meeting including the Armenian Round Table and Mr Gabriel Jemberzi
- The many other deacons who were always ready to assist in anything that was needed. Thanks especially for the beautiful singing and the musical support during the times of common prayer.
- Rev. Fr. Karekin Hambardzumyan, Deputy Director of the Christian Education Center for his interpretation and accompaniment for the group on several occasions
- Technicians for the plenary hall
- Staff of the refectory
- Guest house staff
- The vice-moderators, sub-committee moderators and rapporteurs
- The general secretary and the WCC staff.

11.3 CLOSING

Dr Abuom closed with prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 pm.

APPENDIX I: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Officers:	Dr Agnes Abuom	Moderator
	H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima	Vice-Moderator
	Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson	Vice-Moderator
	Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit	General Secretary

Members:
H.G. Archbishop Nareg Alemezian
Dr Abba Haile Mariam Melese Ayenew
H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian
Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah
Rev. Dr Hyun Ju Bae
Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber
Dr Ulysses Burley III
Rev. Dr Paul Gardner
Rev. Archpriest Mikhail Goundiaev
Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba Kasongo
Rev. Baoping Kan
Prof. Dr Marina Kolovopoulou
Ms Martina Viktorie Kopecká
Rev. Taaroanui Maraea
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste
Bishop Dr Chibuzo Raphael Opoko
Bishop Simo Peura
Dr Audeh B. Quawas
Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins
Bishop John F. White

Advisers:
Rev. Prof. Dr Fernando Enns, Reference Group on Pilgrimage
Rev. Dr Guy Liagre, Conference of European Churches
Dr Karen Nazaryan, ACT Alliance

Apologies:
Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang
Mr Thomas Hyeono Kang

Consensus:
Ms Tara Tautari Barua

Minute-Writer:
Ms Adele Halliday

Mr Doug Chial
Ms Catherine Christ-Taha
Ms Elaine Dykes
Ms Marianne Ejdersten
Rev. Theo Gill
Mr Mark Johnson
Mr Georges Lemopoulos
Prof. Dr Isabel Phiri
Rev. Garland Pierce
Mr Peter Prove
Fr Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca
Rev. Dr Hielke Wolters

APPENDIX II: MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Programme
Dr Agnes Abuom
Dr Abba Haile Mariam Melese Ayenew
Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber
Dr Ulysses Burley III
Rev. Prof. Dr Fernando Enns
Rev. Dr Guy Liagre
Prof. Dr Marina Kolovopoulou
Dr Karen Nazaryan
Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins (mod)

Finance
H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian (mod)
Rev. Dr Hyun Ju Bae
Rev. Dr Paul Gardner
Rev. Archpriest Mikhail Goundiaev
Rev. Taaroanui Maraea
Bishop Dr Chibuzo Raphael Opoko
Bishop Mary Ann Swenson

Public Issues
Dr Agnes Abuom
H.G. Archbishop Nareg Alemezian
H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian
Rev. Dr Hyun Ju Bae
Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber
Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba Kasongo
Rev. Dr Guy Liagre
Rev. Taaroanui Maraea
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste (mod)
Dr Karen Nazaryan

Apologies:
Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang
Mr Thomas Hyeono Kang

Staffing, Personnel and Nominations
H.G. Archbishop Nareg Alemezian
Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima (mod)
Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba Kasongo
Rev. Baoping Kan
Ms Martina Viktorie Kopecká
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste
Bishop Simo Peura
Dr Audeh B. Quawas
Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
Bishop John F. White

APPENDIX III: REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Dear members of the executive committee, advisors, guests, and colleagues,

I. Thanks and Commemoration

I must begin this report to the executive committee with words of thanks. The invitation to come to Armenia and Etchmiadzin is my first reason to start with words of thanks, first of all for the hospitality shown to us by the Armenian Apostolic Church and HH Catholicos Karekin II and his colleagues and staff. This invitation allows us to participate in the significant and very moving year of centennial commemorations of the Armenian genocide. We pay respect to the victims, who are more than victims but who have become martyrs and witnesses of faith, justice and peace, and now are canonized as saints by the Armenian Apostolic Church. We learn from this tragic and brutal yet extremely significant part of the history of humanity and the churches that must never be forgotten.

We use this opportunity to say thanks be to God for the life and faith of the Armenian Apostolic Church throughout the world. It's faithful and committed participation in the WCC is reflected in many ways. We have as WCC been taught about the richness of the tradition and the martyrdom of the Armenian people so that the WCC was one of the first international organisations to recognize the tragedy as a genocide, making that declaration during the 6th Assembly, Vancouver 1983.

These centennial commemorations should mark that we have passed the time when governments continue to be reluctant in naming what happened as a genocide. Such discussion only keeps wounds opened that should by now, for the benefit of all parties, be healed and reconciled through the acknowledgment of the truth. The world, and particularly this part of the world, needs new initiatives that bring a just peace to people who are suffering today in the neighbouring countries.

We are grateful for the readiness of the Armenian Apostolic Church to provide leadership to the WCC, such as in former periods with the moderation of the central committee by HH Catholicos Aram I and now through HH Catholicos Karekin II as President for the Oriental Orthodox churches, and through the participation of HE Archbishop Nareg and HE Archbishop Vicken as members of the executive committee.

As WCC general secretary, I had the honour to represent our WCC fellowship both in the days of solemn and great events here in Armenia in April, as well as in the remarkable commemoration service in the National Cathedral in Washington DC in May, having opportunities to address these gatherings. So far, it has not been possible to find a time for the WCC to mark this genocide in Geneva at the Ecumenical Centre, when both HH Catholicos Karekin II and HH Catholicos Aram I can be present. We have agreed with the St Pierre Cathedral in Geneva to use the Sunday morning during our November meeting of the executive committee as a time for commemoration of the Armenian genocide and common prayer.

During the period since we last met as an executive committee, our dear brother, Rev Dr Philip Potter, the third WCC general secretary, passed away at the age of 93 in his home in Lübeck, Germany. The memorial services were opportunities to give thanks to God for his life and ministry, and to revisit and reflect on his leadership. His legacy spanned a whole era;

he was the only general secretary who had participated in the first nine assemblies of the WCC. We have reflected again on his now famous report to the Vancouver Assembly in which, inspired by 1 Peter 2:4-5, he called the churches of the WCC to be a spiritual house of living stones. In this metaphor of the house of God, it is our being together that compels us to respond to the needs of all creation and fuels our work for justice and peace. The recent celebrations of Pentecost have given us new opportunities to see our ecumenical movement as a fruit of the work of the Holy Spirit. While the image of a spiritual house of living stones might imply a stationary existence, it is not incongruent with our metaphor of a pilgrimage of justice and peace for its goals are the same and its source and motivation is our togetherness, our oneness in Christ. Philip was indeed a pilgrim of justice and peace.

His wife, Bärbel, as well as Konrad Raiser, and many former colleagues of theirs participated in a thanksgiving and memorial service in the Ecumenical Centre 18 May. I participated and spoke also in the funeral service in Lübeck in April. I am grateful for these and former opportunities for me to see how our ministry today is inspired by his courage to speak for those who needed the voice and the work of the WCC.

Another dimension of my thanks is a more personal one. I was granted a study leave at the beginning of this year. What was to be an uninterrupted time of reflection and writing about the various dimensions of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace turned out to be filled with profound disruptions that in themselves led to other reflections about the ecumenical movement and what it means to move together as people of faith on a lifelong and life-giving journey. For part of this time, I was on sick leave (for a persistent case of bronchitis) which presented opportunities to be still and reflect, and to be thankful for all the days we are given health and strength to work, and particularly the times of healing. It made me also more mindful about how some of you and colleagues have had health challenges also in the last months. Today, we are so thankful to God for your recovery. Also during this time, my family and I experienced the passing of my father. We remembered, grieved, and gave thanks for his life, which was a long and fruitful one filled with faithful pastoral ministry and grace, including a formative year with a scholarship granted by the WCC.

Another blessing in his life was participating in the installation service for me in 2010 in Geneva. The day before he was taken home, by intuition, anticipating the news of the next day, I preached in the chapel at Bossey for my Norwegian congregation about the seed of the word of God that has been planted in our lives, particularly through the lives of our parents and foremothers and forefathers. This is our most costly legacy. May we be able to continue this ministry of planting. The outpouring of condolences and prayers from many of you and others in the ecumenical movement reminded me that this global fellowship is the family of God in real and tangible ways.

Now I look forward to two weeks in August to continue writing my reflections on why and how I see the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace as a profound theological perspective on our life together in the time ahead of us, and therefore also as a strategy that takes the WCC forward.

II. On the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace together

II.1 Mapping the terrain and the ways forward

The unifying motif of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace causes us constantly to remember that we are called to *move together in faith*. I have the privilege to report that we *are* moving together, both in actions and in reflections, as well as in our duty to ask how we can do that even better, with wider participation and with even more outcomes from our efforts.

It happens in concrete forms of initiatives in and among many churches to transform the practices of marching together and the rich traditions of pilgrimages as expressions of the common Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. Many have taken new initiatives to reflect on what the call to join this pilgrimage means for a renewed ecumenical commitment, but also renewed witness and action for justice and peace in the world where we live, locally and globally. The openness in our approach during this initial period has opened a further and wider reflection; and, we see now how this terminology and approach are embraced and used by many and in many ways. In the programme work, among colleagues, and in our commissions there is a growing involvement of making contributions to the implementation of this pilgrimage, with their own objectives and initiatives seen in this perspective.

I have addressed colleagues, churches, ecumenical partners, commissions, reference groups, and large gatherings (like Kirchentag in Germany, PCT 150th Anniversary in Taiwan et al, see below) to motivate and mobilize to see that the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace is more than a new idea. It is a new way to understand how the WCC gives leadership to the ecumenical movement's contribution to common witness and service in the world.

For my own understanding and presentation of the Pilgrimage in many contexts, I see more clearly how this is a gift to the ecumenical movement to open our eyes and strengthen our ability to move together with the level of unity we already have in faith, life and witness. The unity we are given in the God of life is a unity in sharing the gifts of creation, salvation and sanctification, the values of the Kingdom of God, righteousness and peace coming from God. With these gifts the Church is called to be present in any context. Sharing together the richness of being in communion with the triune God and with one another, we find new ways to move forward. The presence of God in the world, particularly among the marginalized, oppressed, poor and victims of injustice and war, is to be explored in our shared pilgrimage of justice and peace. This is really a movement in faith, inspired by the content of our faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and shown in the communion and commitment of faith we represent and share together. I hear also many reports about how, for example, the new mission statement initiates fresh reflections to revisit the mission of the churches in the perspective of this pilgrimage.

This concept of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace has now developed in the programmes and work of the WCC. This is seen in the reports and reflections from 2014 and in reports from initiatives and visits from the first part of this year. The reference group for the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace met; and, it is important that we give further directions to how this Pilgrimage is presented and implemented. The communication department under the new director has taken several initiatives in that regard, both in publications, profile of news releases and in using the web for sharing through a new blog etc.

It is also important that we make decisions about focused themes for the following years. Based on reflections in the reference group and in our staff leadership team, I want to share a proposal for discussion in this meeting: For many reasons we continue to focus on climate change before the COP 21 meeting this year. After that, we focus particularly on the challenges to peace and justice in the Middle East next year, including the interfaith perspectives on justice and peace that are relevant also in other contexts like in Asia and Africa. One option would then be that we again have a thematic focus in 2017 on economic justice, and in 2018 focus on justice and peace in Africa. As you understand, all these themes are on our agenda all the time, so these are only ways to make further efforts through mobilisation and reflections on certain themes.

We have in the executive committee decided to have a clear focus of involvement of our member churches with different mechanisms and initiatives but also with openness to how other organizations and partners make their contributions and find their expressions of the pilgrimage. For the purpose of filling the strategic role of the WCC, with responsibility to give coherence, nurture accountability and convene, we remind ourselves that the responsibility for the programmes, priorities, and objectives of the WCC is in this executive committee and that we ask a special reference group to contribute to the strategic reflections. We have also invited one of the moderators of the reference group, a member of the central committee, Prof Fernando Enns, to be with us in this meeting as an effort to further coordinate our reflections on the Pilgrimage and our work of planning and prioritization.

The meetings of four of our commissions, Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME), Ecumenical Education and Formation Commission (EEF), and ECHOS, the WCC Commission on Youth, have already met to discuss their priorities, plans and their contributions to the Pilgrimage. The reference groups on gender and human sexuality have met as well. In addition, we have in the last months had other significant meetings. We had a very much appreciated meeting with more than 40 of the ecumenical officers in the churches, sharing both visions, information, challenges and questions about how we work together more strongly on this Pilgrimage. We have as well had meetings with our funding partners (and some funding churches and ecumenical partners for our programmes).

The outcome of the Working Together gathering with the funding partners and the so called Ecumenical Strategic Forum with some of the funding partners, gave at least some important results: a. there are no less, rather stronger commitment to work with the WCC and support our work under this profile and the programmes and priorities we now have; b. some of our funding partners have problems getting the funding they had before and have to make reductions in their support to the WCC, while many continue at the level they had, and still some are discussing how they can support more; c. there is a clear, and strong commitment to not only fund, but also to work with the WCC in the implementation of our programs; d. there is a wide consensus in the complementarity of the roles and mutual need of WCC and ACT Alliance (and the ACT members), and that the Malawi report points to ways forward in how this can be even more fruitful; e. that the WCC has a special role in coordinating peace initiatives and advocacy work in the ecumenical family.

As important as the destination might be, it is the moving and being together that is our uniqueness and our strength. While on pilgrimage, one may encounter detours and disruptions. It is at these critical moments of the journey that being together and being present with and for one another is so important. This is also the case when we work together

like we do in the governing bodies of the WCC and in our many encounters throughout the year.

Since we last met, many of the colleagues have been moving together in their various programmatic activities; many of these will be described in the various reports that will be tabled and discuss these days. In this report, I hope to highlight how we have tried to work in ways that epitomize this aspect of being together which I have mentioned. I, along with some of you and other colleagues, now have visited many stations on this pilgrimage. We have attempted to offer ecumenical solidarity, to learn more of the contexts (both the needs and the possibilities), and to bear witness to God's desire and call for peace and justice. In nearly every case, there is still much work to be done. We must reflect together and with other partners on how we shall continue to move together in order to make a positive difference related to these issues and situations. You find a listing of visits and meetings since the last executive committee meeting as an appendix to this report. Each is significant to the pilgrimage; however, while perhaps not in chronologically order, I offer only a summary pilgrim's log with reflections and some recommendations for possible follow up.

II.2 Some of the focal points on our journey now

a. Climate change

This year, the world, its political leaders and all who care about the future of the planet are preparing for the significant meeting of COP 21 in Paris in December. The urgent need to make this a real turning point, giving the world a binding, fair and effective agreement on reductions of emissions that cause climate change, is more and more obvious. We call to make this year a pilgrimage for justice and peace through addressing climate change, following up the many former initiatives and appeals to churches, ecumenical partners and others

When I was asked on behalf of all faith based organizations in Geneva to address the Human Rights Council's panel on climate change, I shared my conviction that the contribution of faith should be a contribution to the "right to hope". Human beings should have the right to have a hope for the future, and not only be bombarded with the difficult truth about realities and the alarming prognosis for our climate. There should also be a language and practice of faith that can give us reasons to hope that changes are possible for the better, and thus giving us the right to hope, while acknowledging the truth about the status of the world. In a symposium in April in the Pontifical Academies of Science, I shared the same perspective with scientists, religious leaders, and diplomats. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon clearly shared his convictions that without the moral leadership and the mobilization of commitment and action among religious groups, it would not be possible to get the joint motivation and willingness to make the decisions in December this year that are required for the future of our planet. The scientists also admitted that they have to go out of their comfort zones to find partners in civil society who can mobilize for the changes they see necessary. The WCC general secretary was introduced as the representative of the faith based organization that has worked for the longest period and most comprehensively to address climate change. I think that is correct; and, we see the effects of our work, a much more shared concern and commitment in our churches, even though there are many among us who have not been able to mobilize for the response to this reality that already most affects the poorest among us.

In our preparations for the December meeting in Paris, we are encouraged to learn that the Ecumenical Patriarch HAH Bartholomew II, will be present and address the gathering. We

believe that the encyclical of Pope Francis on climate change will be presented soon. The many partners of faith communities see how the WCC member churches move. Now is the time to act, to do more, and to show the way forward in order to achieve these urgently needed changes.

b. Contributions to peace processes together with member churches and other partners

We have to acknowledge the fact that our time is again a time of martyrdom. The stories about the many martyrs in the last months that are being tortured and killed because of their Christian identity and faith are shocking. The events are calling us to prayer and solidarity in carrying the cross of Christ in our world today. They also call for new initiatives to justice and peace. The situation for the Christians, as well as for other communities made targets for violence, depends on the willingness by those in power to look beyond narrow interests and serve the interests of all, taking new steps towards justice and peace. We as WCC and churches must support those who have the significant and important task to make a peace process possible and plausible, like Mr De Mistura, the UN Envoy to Syria, whom I met recently in Geneva. He emphasized the significance of faith and courage but also the strong voices for peace processes that church leaders can provide.

These increases of martyrdoms are dramatic developments in many of our churches, in Pakistan, Kenya, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria etc. We see how their faithful witness becomes a strong uniting bond between all Christians, regardless of confession and church tradition.

Several of the visits I mention in this report have explored how we can make contributions to peace in current hot spots of conflicts and violence, particularly how we can work together with our member churches and ecumenical and inter-religious bodies for that purpose. We see that there is a need for the WCC to fill the role of bringing the national/regional conflicts into the concern and attention of the global church family for accompaniment and support. It is also clear that the WCC has a role of advocacy for peace, for non-violence, for ending conflicts through political means, to support and believe in peace initiatives beyond what sceptics might support, to mobilize the focus on the suffering of ordinary people and their humanitarian needs as a basis for actions of solidarity and actions to establish peace. The WCC is the member churches; and, we see how significant their role is in many areas of conflict, how they can be peacemakers and witnesses of truth and reconciliation. We see also how churches (rightly or wrongly) can be seen as part of conflicts, and how important the ecumenical and the global fellowship are to give a wider horizon and arena for their involvement towards a just peace.

c. Economic Justice

I was invited, together with other leaders of faith based organizations, to meet with Dr Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank in Washington, DC, in February, but could only respond to this invitation during a visit to Washington in May. He presented the common objective, eradication of radical poverty, and the new, agreed criterion for analysing the work of the World Bank, the preferential option for the poor. He did so in reference to his personal knowledge of liberation theologians' writings, in a critical assessment of the past of the World Bank, but also as an invitation to look at new possibilities for cooperation towards shared objectives and a shared value of the preferential option for the poor. He invited the contributions from faith-based organizations to the implementation of this vision. I presented how the WCC addresses root causes that are obstacles to the eradication of poverty, such as violence and militarized conflicts, inequalities and injustices in the global, national and local contexts, the financial architectures that gives corporations enormous power in many

countries, and the negative effects of climate change. The World Bank president acknowledged the significant role faith communities can play in this work. I encouraged him to relate to the WCC as both a platform and a network including our relationships to ACT Alliance as an ecumenical tool for humanitarian aid and development.

We have a programme for addressing economic justice and related issues. We need to develop it further as a significant contribution from the WCC in the years to come. We need to continue to address in our advocacy and together with many partners the root causes to poverty, the financial structures that are binding people and nations in risky and destructive developments, the unemployment among young people all over the world, the destructiveness of inequalities in many or most contexts of the world – both locally and globally, the connections between conflicts and poverty, and climate change and poverty as issues of just peace.

We are working on some common initiatives together with the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, and Council for World Mission to follow up a joint statement from São Paulo and a recommendation from a panel of experts. As we go into models of cooperation on a very significant field of justice and peace, it is important that we do that with as much of our constituency as possible, with the level of consensus and commitment we have established in the processes before and during the 10th Assembly, and with adequate forms expressing the identity of the WCC and our commitment to economic justice and the preferential option for the poor. We need to find models of cooperation where the policies for advocacy and implementation are developed and formulated by the WCC governing bodies and in accordance to our former decisions, but with new creativity and new initiatives related to how this can be a stronger contribution in cooperation with other partners. Unfortunately this cooperation with the partners mentioned has taken more time to get its proper format; but, I believe it is moving forward now.

d. Interfaith challenges and commitments

We experience that the role of religion in conflicts calls upon the attention of the whole world. Our task, with the many partners we have in our interfaith dialogues and cooperation, is to say that these are abuses of religion as ideology and motivation for violence, extremism and terror that are intolerable as expressions of religious faith and totally condemnable. However, these realities of recruitment to extremism and violence need to be addressed from many perspectives. Also issues of failing states and weak economies, unemployment, lack of good governance, geopolitical developments, etc. are influencing the bigger picture.

Nevertheless, the potential of interfaith encounters, common statements, and new standards for dialogues between religions are relevant contributions to discussions about democracy, citizenship and freedom of speech and publication in a framework of responsibility and justice (an issue I addressed publicly after the tragic events in Paris and Copenhagen in January). There is great need for competent and on-going interfaith relations and initiatives; some of them are reported in the documents for this meeting.

As I have seen it more and more in many contexts, the relationships between young people of different religions are becoming absolutely crucial to the shaping of the future. Therefore, I have discussed with international ecumenical youth organizations (WSCF; YMCA; YWCA) and others; and, I hear the echo of this from the ECHOS commission report: how can we empower and facilitate interfaith cooperation and dialogue between young peoples in a new way and a new scale? The project with the International Labour Organization in Egypt is one

example of how this can happen, as is Bossey's interfaith seminar that is held each summer. Our strategies for using our capacities, networks and competencies, must be explored in this perspective.

II.3 Reports on the Way

II.3.1 Israel-Palestine

Along with the moderator and vice moderators of the central committee, I made a pilgrimage of justice and peace to Israel-Palestine. We combined our regular spring meeting with this time of exploration, reflection and accompaniment. In Jerusalem, we were among many pilgrims visiting the holy sites of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Ours included opportunities for dialogue with church leaders, Christian organizations, peace and justice workers, political leaders, and interfaith partners. I have now visited the Holy Land many times; but, with each visit I am more depressed by what seems to be a worsening of the situation. Israelis and Palestinians seem farther away from peace and justice as settlements continue to expand. Our visit was just prior to the national elections; the political rhetoric did not offer a peaceful or just way forward.

During this Lenten pilgrimage, some walked together with other pilgrims the Via Dolorosa (Way of Grief) of our Lord. The leadership of the central committee had the opportunity to walk with others in Bethlehem and the Jordan Valley to learn of their grief as they are displaced from their homes and their livelihood due to the expansion of the settlements. We heard from families who were displaced only the day prior to our visit. We were convinced more than ever that the WCC's presence in the region with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine Israel (EAPPI) is critically needed.

As I have reflected, I think that the WCC and its partners must strengthen our efforts:

1. to mobilize the churches to continue to advocate and pray for peace and justice in Israel Palestine through such means as the World Week of Peace in Palestine Israel (20-26 September 2015)
2. to promote responsible and alternative pilgrimages to the Holy Land which offer opportunities to pilgrims to visit the holy sites as well as reflect on the current realities in the regions
3. to advocate for peace and justice for both Israelis and Palestinians, appealing to a more committed response to our consistent call for a two state solution and the end of occupation and violence, e.g. by supporting the initiatives to recognize the Palestinian state
4. to speak the truth in true love and care to and for both parties, particularly now calling for abstaining from violence from Hamas, and calling the Jewish partners to see how the on-going occupation and violation of international law are undermining their and our common moral values, and how the support to the prolongation and increase of settlements through the occupation is destructive also to the people and state of Israel.

II.3.2 Japan

I gave a keynote address at the 4th International Global Conference on Article 9 of Japan's Constitution and visited the WCC member churches in Japan. This visit and participation in the international conference on Article 9 contributed to strengthening the solidarity and accompaniment of the international ecumenical movement for the efforts toward peace being

made by the Japanese churches. It also contributed to promoting the value and significance of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace as an instrument for promoting interreligious cooperation for peace and justice in Japan and other parts of the world. The visit also highlighted the extent to which Japanese society has taken a turn toward a conservative orientation. Such an orientation has led to an increase in "hate speech" against ethnic minorities in Japan, particularly the Koreans resident in Japan. It also identified the extent to which the Japanese government and businesses are hiding the real truth about radiation contamination and pollution from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactor disaster. Finally, it highlighted the need for the WCC's increased solidarity and accompaniment for the Japanese churches and civil society in the fight for a nuclear free world. This will happen at the 70th commemoration of the use of nuclear bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as a WCC delegation led by Bishop Swenson will participate in the events in Hiroshima in August.

II.3.3 Ukraine

Following several public statements by WCC addressing the crisis in Ukraine, I was able to lead in March an ecumenical delegation composed of high-ranking representatives of several WCC member churches.

The aims of the delegation visit were:

- to express solidarity with the churches in Ukraine and with the Ukrainian people
- to explore and understand the situation in Ukraine by listening to the leadership of the WCC member church in the country and to other churches and religious communities, and by having a direct contact with the Ukrainian realities;
- to provide a platform for expressing different opinions on the conflict in Ukraine bypassing the level of propaganda and caricatures;
- to explore ways of how the wider WCC fellowship could contribute to justice and peace for Ukraine.

We learned that the severity of the humanitarian situation resulting from the conflict in eastern Ukraine is under-reported internationally, and is receiving an inadequate response from the international humanitarian community, though many Ukrainian and Russian church bodies are actively engaged in providing humanitarian supplies and support. As we continue to reflect on the interconnectedness of unity, peace and justice, we noted that church divisions in this context make it harder for a unified Christian voice to advocate for national peace. Tense relations between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) and the 'Kiev Patriarchate' are exacerbated in the current context due to competing nationalisms and to Kiev Patriarchate 'invasions' and 'occupations' of former UOC-MP churches/parishes.

There were positive signs. The All Ukraine Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (AUCCRO) is an extraordinarily inclusive forum of religious communities and related organizations, encompassing almost every church tradition represented in Ukraine as well as the Muslim and Jewish communities. Despite the impact of the current political/military situation on the religious communities themselves, the AUCCRO seems to be able to function collectively, producing consensus positions on Ukrainian national integrity, for an end to the conflict, and for the promotion of peace and reconciliation. Notably, both the UOC-MP and the 'Kiev Patriarchate' are represented in the AUCCRO and participate in its initiatives. The unified voice and witness of churches and religious

communities, through AUCCRO, for peace and reconciliation in Ukraine has been and will continue to be greatly needed.

Subsequent to this visit, H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima, Archpriest Mikhail Goundiaev and I met with H.H. Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia to debrief and discuss the observations of the ecumenical delegation visit to Ukraine. Patriarch Kirill expressed his appreciation for the WCC-led visit to Kiev and to eastern Ukraine and proposed that the WCC should also consider a visit to most eastern Ukraine, so as to further deepen its understanding of this complex and tragic situation.

The possibility of WCC convening a roundtable between Ukrainian and Russian church leaders (as proposed by AUCCRO) was also discussed, but not concluded. It was agreed that any next steps on this matter should be taken on the basis of mutual consultation and agreement. We have taken initiatives to have cooperation with OSCE for further visits and conversations between the parties.

Our unity, our being together whether at home or on pilgrimage, undergirds our common witness and work for justice and peace.

II.3.4 Taiwan

I was able to visit the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) and share in its 150th Mission Anniversary and 60th General Assembly. I served as the preacher during the 150th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service on Easter Sunday, 4 April 2015, while also attending several of the celebratory functions and events. This was my first official visit as general secretary to Taiwan. The PCT would like to further participate and contribute to the WCC's work on peace building that utilizes its various experiences and networks that were developed during the past years. The suggestion was for the PCT to be included in the Ecumenical Peace Advocacy Network (EPAN) that is being developed after the consultation in Sigtuna, Sweden. The PCT also expressed a keen desire to participate in the WCC's work of ecumenical formation through having its youth study at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey and participate in the WCC's internship and stewards programmes.

The PCT has an impressive ministry in health, diakonia, and mission, including and empowering indigenous peoples in their work. They expressed also their commitment to social justice and peace in different ways. It was interesting for me how they look at the WCC as a very significant platform for working together with other churches, and particularly for their encounters and work with the China Christian Council.

II.3.5 South Sudan

The moderator, Dr Agnes Abuom, conveyed the request from church leaders in South Sudan to meet outside the country with the WCC and some of their most committed partners. We organized such a meeting; and, it was hosted by Patriarch HH Mathias of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Addis Ababa in April. The moderator, general secretary and other staff colleagues prepared and participated in the meeting. We saw a great need for affirming the role of the NCC in South Sudan and particularly now with a new leadership. The former role of Dr Samuel Kobia as ecumenical envoy has concluded as he has also been appointed as special advisor to the President of Kenya. The church leaders shared their very strong

commitment to be a uniting and peace-making voice in South Sudan in need of strong and on-going support in this role from the worldwide fellowship of churches.

Dr Abuom and I listened and discussed in depth with them the present situation and obstacles to peace. The tragic crisis for hundreds of thousand due to the armed conflict is totally unacceptable and must be solved by a real will to implement a peace treaty and to care more for the well-being of the suffering, poor people of South Sudan than for their respective political ambitions and priorities. The WCC will continue to offer space for these consolidations in a framework of an Ecumenical Round Table. We need this to be developed further and financed by funding partners. Their commitment to support these roles of the churches and their leaders is solid.

II.3.6 USA

During the National Council of Churches, USA's Christian Unity Gathering, I was able to meet and engage with many of the WCC member church leaders in the US. The WCC president for North America, Bishop Mark MacDonald was also present as well as the vice moderator of the central committee, Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, and members of the WCC executive committee, Drs Ulysses Burley and Sharon Watkins. The WCC had a prominent presence in this gathering. I was able to participate on a panel discussing interfaith cooperation to combat religious extremism as well as give a keynote address at a banquet sponsored by the World Council of Churches Relations Committee of the NCC. These opportunities gave me a better understanding of the reality of the churches in the US and the ecumenical landscape. It also allowed for mutual exploration of synergies and points of collaboration between the WCC and its US member churches in such critical areas as climate justice and peace and justice in Israel Palestine and ecumenical accompaniment for the US churches as they address issues of racial justice. The NCC's two priorities of mass incarceration and interfaith dialogue and cooperation for peace-making can be strong contributions to the WCC's Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

Finally, while in the US, I was privileged to preach at the commemoration service of the centennial anniversary of the Armenian Genocide held at the National Cathedral in DC, thanks to the initiative of H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian. The Armenian members of the NCC and WCC stressed repeatedly how important this accompaniment of the churches meant to the Armenian Apostolic Church. In my sermon, I was able to make connections between this atrocity and other current violations of human rights, dignity, and life in other parts of the world, including the racially motivated violence by some police in the USA. There was wide coverage of the service, particularly given the presence of the US Vice President Joseph Biden, the Armenia President Serzh Sargsyan, and US Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power and the two Armenian Catholicoses, Karekin and Aram.

II.3.7 The German Kirchentag, Stuttgart

The German Kirchentag is a remarkable event as it gathers more than 100 000 participants every time for reflections, discussions, prayers, and sharing of common life. A significant number of ecumenical guests are invited from the whole world; and, the WCC usually both has a booth and is asked to contribute to the programme. That was also the case this time. Clare Amos was asked to present on dialogue between Christians and Jews. I was asked to preach in a service organized by our partner, Brot für die Welt, addressing the care for the earth as a matter of justice and peace. I was also asked to give a lecture in a 3 hour seminar

on pilgrimage and resistance, on how the Pilgrimage can express a spirituality of justice and peace that is carried by our sources and practices of faith. The Kirchentag in Stuttgart this year offered some space to focus on peace. Still, some raised the critical question why it was not even more the focus in a time when so much is at stake for peace in many contexts of the world. I referred to and supported the public letter of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, where he urged the Kirchentag to speak up against the on-going Israeli occupation and address the violation of international law. I said that it would be a significant expression of love to both the Israeli and Palestinian people to avoid accepting the present status of the conflict. There was an initiative to raise support for an appeal to strengthen the relations between East and West in Europe again.

III. Challenges and movements forward for the WCC as organization

The WCC had for the first time a balanced and approved plan and budget before January 1. This was to be changed after the decision of the Swiss National Bank in January regarding the exchange rates. This is reported more extensively in the finance report.

The situation could be seen as a crisis to the sustainability of the operations of the WCC. It definitely was a challenge. It has been a task for the whole staff to find solutions for a revised budget for 2015, which I authorized in May with the understanding that this could not wait any longer. The task for the general secretary to bring another approach to the plans for the WCC if there was a shortfall of income like this in the perspectives for 2016 and 2017 (which includes some reductions from major donors in the coming years) has been formulated by the executive committee and has been addressed in the following months. There are significant tasks for us in this meeting to discuss priorities, further plans for programmes and staffing. This will come in the different sub-committees, but at this point of introduction I will share the following reflections:

The sustainability of the WCC will always be dependent on what the churches and their organizations are willing to contribute to the council. Their commitment is not changing, rather affirmed, even if the relative value of their contributions in CHF is reduced. The sustainability of the council is most of all a matter of commitment to the work of the council and the willingness and ability to focus on how we move forward. The concept of the pilgrimage is a helpful one in this respect, as well. We have to move with what we have, and to adjust accordingly. We have to take new initiatives and new steps so that we are developing new and wider commitments all while continuing to involve our traditional funding partners in the work of the WCC. We also need to make sure that we look at all parts of the budgets, also staffing costs. This has been done; and, some reflections will be shared in a closed session. Let me make it clear that we need people in core functions as programme executives working together and with the partners we have. The ratio between staff costs and implementation costs can be adjusted in favour of more staffing costs as we see that there are different ways of mobilizing partners and resources if we have proper staff in the right positions appointed to work for the WCC.

We have to deal with the risk related to the loan to address the problem of the pension fund, as there are some delays in the progress of the building project. The project in itself is very solid, and in the process of approval in Geneva. There are certainly ways to solve this; but, the concerns need our attention in this meeting. *Cf.* the separate reporting about these points in the appendices.

The integration of EAA is done, formally, and is now to be implemented in practical terms. This is a new opportunity for the WCC to fill our role of bringing coherence and accountability to the ecumenical movement, coordinating more ecumenical advocacy. I am sure there is great potential in this involvement of a wider circle in our work through this ecumenical initiative; and, I trust my colleagues to lead this process in this next phase.

IV. 2016 Central Committee Meeting

In this executive committee meeting, we will set more of the framework for our next central committee meeting in Norway. Together with colleagues and the hosting bishops, the Preses of the Bishops' Conference and the Bishop of Nidaros, and the general secretary for the Council for Ecumenical Relations of the Church of Norway, I visited Trondheim in January to discuss the cooperation and make decisions about facilities. A significant grant of 2 mil NOK and other offers from the Major of Trondheim, the Church of Norway, and Norwegian Church Aid will make the budget for this meeting much easier to handle for us.

We should in this executive committee meeting look at the themes to be prepared for the plenaries. I hope the next meeting of our central committee can be another significant step on our common pilgrimage. Trondheim has been and has become again a centre for "modern pilgrimage;" many still are walking and sailing long distances. Nidaros is a national and international site for pilgrims to reach; and, the national church and the diocese are very interested in making this visit of the WCC an opportunity to emphasize pilgrimage as a way to be responsible for the world together.

Therefore, I recommend that one plenary of the central committee meeting should focus on the pilgrimage, where we are going together now, and also how the practices of pilgrimage can be renewed and revitalized through the focus on perspectives of justice and peace. This pilgrimage of justice and peace is an effort to walk and work together as far as we have come on our way towards visible unity of the Church. I wonder if not the time in 2016 has come to reflect again on how far we are and how we move on in our search for Christian unity. The reception process of the ecclesiology study of Faith and Order, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, could also be an occasion for raising the theme of unity in one plenary. I hope we also can present and discuss the text on religion and violence. In my view, we also need to discuss in at least one plenary how we move together as churches to address the challenges of the children and youth of today. This has to do with economic justice, with interfaith initiatives, with how we focus on their needs and their rights, and how we as a fellowship of churches can contribute to this critical area of work. I hope these reflections can initiate our conversation about the central committee in 2016.

CONCLUSION

I am proud of how we are working together to make the WCC and its partners move forward on this Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. I am inspired to see that the churches expect a lot from us and that we together can develop our Christian witness in our time. I am encouraged to see the confidence there is in the WCC and our capacities. I am challenged by the challenges we will discuss in this meeting but convinced that we have the ability to give sustainability to the council through affirming its "movability". This happens through our joint efforts and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We hope and pray this is indeed the case even in this meeting.

Appendix 1 General Secretary Visits and Meetings from 1 December 2014-8 June 2015

TRAVEL:

DATE	PLACE	PURPOSE
1-2 December 2014	Sweden	Stockholm (Sigtuna) Ecumenical Peace Building Consultation
3-10 December 2014	Japan	• Article 9 International Conference • Official visit to Japan - visit member churches and NCCJ
5-6 January 2015	Norway	Trondheim – visit 2016 central committee facilities, meet with city and church authorities.
9-12 March 2015	Palestine and Israel	LCC meeting and pilgrimage to the Holy Land
17-20 March 2015	Ukraine	Kiev- high level solidarity visit to Ukraine – meeting with church leaders and government authorities.
3-6 April 2015	Taiwan	• PCT 150 years commemoration ceremonies • Official visit to Taiwan
7-8 April 2015	Korea	Hanshin University 75th anniversary – conferring of honorary doctorate to the WCC GS
13-14 April, 2015	Ethiopia	High level meeting of South Sudan church leaders
15 April 2015	Turkey	Official visit to His All Holiness The Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew
16 April 2015	Germany	Lübeck – Funeral service of Philip Potter, former WCC General Secretary
20-21 April 2015	Russia	Moscow – official visit to H.H. Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill I
22-25 April 2015	Armenia	Yerevan – Official commemoration of the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide
28 April 2015	Italy	Rome - Vatican Consultation on Climate Change
5-9 May 2015	USA	Washington • Meeting with World Bank President, Dr Jim Yong Kim • NCCCUSA Christian Unity Gathering • Preaching at Washington Cathedral at the Centennial Commemoration Worship of the Armenian Genocide
3-7 June 2015	Germany	Stuttgart – Kirchentag

VISITS/REPRESENTATIONS IN GENEVA:

DATE	PLACE	PURPOSE
17 February 2015	Ecumenical Centre	CCIA Commission
18 February 2015	Ecumenical Institute Bossey	ETE Commission
3 March 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs and delegation – courtesy visit
5 March 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Mission 21 Director, Rev. Claudia Bandixen and colleagues
6 March 2015	Palais des Nations, Geneva	Participate in Human Rights Council Panel Discussion on Climate Change

16 March 2015	Ecumenical Institute Bossey	CWME Commission
23 March 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Eritrean Bishops
25 March 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Bishops of Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau
24-27 March 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Staff Planning Days
17 April 2015	Ecumenical Centre	SLG retreat
20 April 2015	Intercontinental Hotel Geneva	Dinner with Ambassador Knut Vollebaek
27 April 2015	Ecumenical Centre	A prayer service paying tribute to the Ethiopian Christians killed by the Islamic State mid-April organized by the WCC and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
28 April-1 May 2015	Ecumenical Institute Bossey	Ecumenical Officers Network
30 April 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Irish School of Ecumenics
30 April 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Rev. Larry Miller, Global Christian Forum
12 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Ms Beris Gwynne, Director World Vision International
18 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre and Ecumenical Institute Bossey	• Ceremony celebrating the life and ministry of former WCC General Secretary, Rev. Dr Philip Potter • Dinner with Bishop Bärbel Wartenberg-Potter and select group of friends of the Potters plus WCC GS staff.
20 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Courtesy Visit of new Focolare leadership – Marie and Diego and delegation
19-20 May 2015	Ecumenical Institute Bossey	Working Together Meeting
21-22 May 2015	Ecumenical Institute Bossey	Strategic Ecumenical Forum
21 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Address meeting on The Future of Faith based health care provision
24-26 May 2015	Ecumenical Institute Bossey	Syria Inter-Community Consultation – meeting with UN Special Envoy for Syria, Mr Staffan de Mistura
26 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	WSCF interim coordinator /Centennial Fund
27 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Address ECLOF Board Meeting
27-29 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	International Conference on Peace and Security in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Appendix 2 WCC programme staffing and financial capacity, 2014-2017

In July 2014, central committee approved the *WCC financial strategy 2014-2017*, which accompanies the *WCC Strategic plan 2014-2017* and which sets out how the WCC aims to remain a sustainable organisation now and in the longer-term. The budget framework included in the financial strategy for the four-year period set out a profile as follows for programme income and staffing:

Extract: financial strategy 2014-2017, 7/2014	2014	2015	2016	2017
	CHF 000	CHF 000	CHF 000	CHF 000
Total programme income	20,688	20,084	19,577	19,070
Staffing: full-time equivalents				
Executives and young professionals	47.0	44.7	44.7	44.7
Assistants	20.8	20.9	20.9	20.9
Interns	1.2	4.0	4.0	4.0
Total programme staff	**69.0**	**69.6**	**69.6**	**69.6**
Staff cost as % programme income	48%	48%	49%	50%

The programme income profile of CHF 19 million was considered a threshold point for sustainability of the *WCC Strategic plan 2014-2017*. The financial strategy includes as an indicator, or required action of stewardship:

> "In 2016 (or earlier, should conditions arise) should projections suggest that total programme income might fall below CHF 19 million in 2017, executive committee reviews any required special plans for sustainability, as presented by the general secretary."

In January 2015, the Swiss National Bank abandoned its policy of supporting the Euro, and the Swiss franc/Euro rate decreased by almost 15%. Other currencies also decreased in value against the Swiss franc. The revised budget 2015 and the financial framework for 2016 now present programme income below the CHF 19 million-threshold for sustainability of the *WCC Strategic plan 2014-2017*.

Financial profile 2014-2017, May 2015	2014 Actual	2015 Rev budget	2016 Framework	2017 Framework
	CHF 000	CHF 000	CHF 000	CHF 000
Total programme income	21,045	18,641	18,297	18,297
Increase/(decrease) from *strategic plan*	357	(1,443)	(1,280)	(773)
Staffing: full-time equivalents				
Executives and young professionals	46.79	43.63		
Assistants	18.08	18.99		
Interns	0.25	0.92		
Total programme staff	**65.12**	**63.54**	**58.00**	**58.00**
Staff cost as % programme income	48%	48%	49%	50%

The ratio of staff cost to programme income is indicative for 2016-2017, based on prior years' actual data. Planning for 2016 and 2017's activities will take account of the reduced financial capacities, ensuring that sufficient funding is applied to the areas of focus, in order to attain results.

Past experience indicates that there may have been "over-planning"; this practice is to be set aside. Reviewing staff capacities, which decrease in the profile above, and knowing that programmatic work is accomplished through the cooperative efforts of programme executives, project assistants and other staff, the staff leadership group has concluded that the norm should be a maximum of three activities per programme executive per year.

Appendix 3 Update on the WCC building development project

On 10 November 2014, the World Council of Churches' Area Development Plan (ADP) for *Green Village* was filed with the Geneva department of town planning. The ADP, which defines building volumes, the layout of the estate and access, together with the required environmental impact studies, is now under formal review by the responsible authorities, with the expectation that approval will be issued in June 2016.

Extract from WCC's ADP for *Green Village*, with references noted for buildings

A: Offices and Chapel 4,245 sqm
B: Ecumenical Centre offices 7,935 sqm
C: Offices for WCC's tenants 12,640 sqm
D: Offices and commercial area 9,040 sqm
E: Offices 13,990 sqm
F: Apartments 6,010 sqm
G: Hotel-residence 7,840 sqm
Car park spaces: 680 spaces

Progress with the authorities' formal review: November 2014-June 2015

A calendar has been prepared by the department of town planning, setting out the different phases of the review process, leading to adoption of ADP in June 2016. Assuming no unfavourable preliminary opinions are received from the formal reviews, the ADP will be open in the next phase for a period of public review. Should the authorities not release the ADP for public review in June 2015, however, then the ADP may require to be adapted to conform to new regulations which are about to take effect, which would cause delay. The outcome of the preliminary review from the transport department is keenly awaited, being of particular importance for the progress of the ADP.

WCC risk assessment and action plan

A meeting was held with Implenia in May 2015 to discuss aspects of risk in the project, and in particular the timeline, given WCC's financial obligations with regard to the loan of CHF 24 million, maturing in March 2017. The timeline, and its revisions since May 2012, as well as the extent of the building fund reserve, are set out below.

It was determined from the risk review that it is too early to bring a plan of action to executive committee for decision in June 2015 concerning the estimated addition to reserves which may be required, but that decision will be required in November 2015, in the context of budget 2016. The following preliminary actions were agreed:

(i) The target for approval of the ADP in June 2016 should not be revised; rather WCC should remain in contact with the Geneva department of town planning, if necessary at the highest levels, to emphasise the importance to WCC of the agreed calendar;

(ii) In September 2015, Implenia will reassess the financial profile for the project, reviewed in general terms in 2012 before the selection of *Green Village*, to take account of:
- the buildings as now defined, including the residential building, with its regulated land sale price;
- the increased land utilisation ratio (from 1.7 to 1.82);
- market evolution with regard to rent in CHF/m2, and capitalisation ratios;
- the likelihood that the first building transactions may be the residential building and hotel-residence, rather than office buildings "D" and "E", and the capital which might then be generated for loan repayment; and
- the estimated cost profiles of the *Green Village* buildings.

(iii) WCC will further pursue financing options which may be drawn upon after March 2017, including terms for the loan renewal; the possibility of a loan from the State, in particular under terms offered to international organisations under the *Federal Act on… Financial Subsidies granted by Switzerland to international organisations as a Host State*; or the possibility of a loan from a member church or ecumenical partner.

Other steps in progress

Certain easements are required to be exchanged between the WCC and the State of Geneva, owner of the neighbouring plot, so that it may use its land most effectively, adding an attic level to its building, while WCC may benefit from the required easements for *Green Village*. Implenia is the development partner for both projects. A Swiss lawyer, independently mandated by WCC, is reviewing the terms proposed.

An amendment to the notarial act confirming the increased land utilisation on both of the neighbouring plots is being drafted for signature by WCC and the State of Geneva.

Building project timeline

The timeline reported at executive committee in November 2014 is still considered valid, and shows that a building sale could be concluded in June 2017, with a building permit.

		Completion dates, estimated and actual			
		Actual	Development contract	Reported at central committee	Reported at executive committee
			signed 30.5.12	Jul-14	Nov-14
Phase	**Description**				
0	Preparatory: assessment of buildings	31.12.12	30.9.12	31.12.12	31.12.12
1	Architects' competition	31.10.13	30.6.13	31.10.13	31.10.13
	Delivery of ADP to Canton	30.11.14	*30.9.13**		
2	Canton & Conseil d'Etat adopt ADP		30.9.14	1.1.16	30.6.16
	iterative phases				
3	Building permit adopted		30.9.15	31.12.16	30.6.17
4	Financial objective for sale defined		31.12.15	30.11.16	31.5.17
5	Commercialisation; investor designated		31.3.16	31.12.16	30.6.17
6	Delivery of building		31.3.18	31.12.18	30.6.19

*****Date not in development contract, but defined in the rules for the architects' competition as being 40 days after end of competition

The *Global Fund* project on the neighbouring plot has been delayed by over two years following residents' objections to the traffic impact. Following negotiation and an agreed reduction in the number of car park spaces, it is now expected that construction works will begin on the neighbouring plot in autumn 2015.

Financial commitments and designated fund for building project

The WCC's loan of CHF 24,000,000, with interest at 1.3% (CHF 312,000) per annum, requires no reimbursement until maturity at 31.3.17. The bank issued terms proposing the continuity of the loan at market rate, with annual reimbursement at 2% (CHF 480,000). The position on the Designated Fund for the Building Project is set out below.

Designated Fund for Building Project	
	CHF
At 31.12.14	1,592,000
Loan interest to 31.3.17	(702,000)
Budget professional fees to 31.3.17	(100,000)
Estimated fund at 31.3.17	790,000
Assuming rate remains at 1.3%	
Interest to 30.6.19	(690,440)
Budget professional fees to 30.6.19	(99,560)
	-
Capital required for reimbursements	
31.3.18	480,000
31.3.19	480,000
	960,000

The building project fund provided for interest for a period longer than the initial five years to 31.3.17, in the likelihood that the entire loan might not be repaid in one tranche at that date. Loan interest could be covered for two additional years.

To ensure assets are available to make the required loan reimbursements in 2018 and 2019, the required level of general reserves has to be assessed.

An increase to the designated fund for

APPENDIX IV: SUMMARY OF UPDATE ON THE INCOME DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

A. Strengthening financial stewardship by member churches

The membership contributions plan is moving forward in 2015 with a 2% increase requested from 139 churches. Some 69 churches provided a pledge for 2015 based on negotiation; while the 2014 contribution level was requested from 137 churches. Work continues to negotiate increases with individual member churches. Central committee members are actively engaged in strengthening the churches' financial stewardship.

It was noted that 60% of the member churches made a financial contribution in 2014, while the milestone for 2016 is 80% participation. Of the 345 member churches, 29 (7%) are considered financially inactive, having not made a contribution in more than 10 years. This is a challenge to the membership contributions plan.

The sub-committee reviewed the 2015 milestone to develop fundraising materials to assist member churches in securing membership contributions. The sub-committee noted that "twinning", whereby churches from the same family find ways to support one another in strengthening membership contributions, would be a more efficient method to increase contributions and strengthen the fellowship.

B. Building on strong relationships with specialized ministries

Two partners announced the possibility to compensate currency losses on their 2015 contributions, which are being pursued. Two partners announced a reduction in contributions in 2016, which have been taken into account in the framework budget 2016. In response to current trends, more than one specialized ministry has suggested pursuing joint funding applications to government agencies with the WCC.

C. Developing new sources of income

A number of applications for funds of approximately CHF 1 million in total are under development with relatively new funding partners.

APPENDIX V: PILGRIMAGE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE REFERENCE GROUP REPORT

I. Introduction

The first meeting of the Reference Group on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace (RG PJP) met from February 22 to 26, 2015 at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland. Led by the co-moderators, Prof. Dr Magali do Nascimento Cunha and Rev. Prof. Dr Fernando Enns, the reference group spent five intense days reviewing their terms of reference, reflecting on central committee document GEN 05 (rev) "An Invitation to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace", hearing and reflecting on stories, reflections and analyses from distinct contexts and the various streams of the ecumenical community, and accompanied by the full and active participation of observers from the Jewish, Muslim and Roman Catholic communities.

The reference group has the following mandate:

- To give advice on how the member churches can take forward the pilgrimage of justice and peace;
- To monitor the activities of the member churches, ecumenical partners and civil society related to and relevant for the pilgrimage of justice and peace;
- To help strengthen and promote the cooperation between member churches, ecumenical partners and people of good will in the planning, implementation and reporting on activities on the pilgrimage of justice and peace;
- To contribute to the theological study process on issues related to the pilgrimage of justice and peace following the recommendation by the report of the programme guidelines committee of the 10th assembly;
- To accompany the WCC's pilgrimage of justice and peace staff group in carrying out the recommendations of WCC governing bodies and to offer advice on further development of the work on the pilgrimage of justice and peace; and
- To prepare reports on its work and process to the executive committee and central committee meetings through the general secretary.

The meeting was rooted in and deeply inspired by the daily prayer, singing and Bible Study, which along with the testimonies and experience of churches and people rooted in specific contexts, set a spiritual, biblical, and theological frame for the time together. This also grounded the approach to elaborating the advice, observations and recommendations offered to the general secretary in this report, and followed the dimensions of the PJP as presented in GEN 05 (rev): *Via Positiva* (Celebrating the Gifts), *Via Negativa* (Visiting the Wounds), *Via Transformativa* (Transforming the Injustices).

The reference group (RG) was extremely appreciative of the Bible study leadership of Rev. Dr Jione Havea, in opening up uncommon readings of texts from Genesis and Exodus, drawing on the Pacific Islanders concept of "*Kautaha*" as the work that the community does together.

Rev. Dr Mele'ana Puloka of Tonga shared a story of the importance in Tongan culture of the individual preparing for and undertaking a journey with the community in mind, and gave a strong testimony of the reconciling and peace building power of the Gospel in overcoming a longstanding situation of rivalry, aggression and violence. Rev. Dr Solomon Rongpi of India told a story of two tribes, both Baptist, locked in a decades-long and seemingly intractable violent conflict over land and the hopeful commitment of the church to engage in peace making and the imperative to undertake actions leading to peace. Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, WCC general secretary, reflected from a personal perspective the recent loss of his father. He also grounded in a European perspective that justice and peace are faith imperatives, and noted the continuity from the WCC's original commitment "to stay together" now being expressed in the WCC's commitment "to move together".

Small group work and dialogue allowed all the participants in the RG to share their stories and perspectives on the three dimensions of PJP each from their own contexts and relating to the reality of the churches. The strengths and gifts of spirituality, biblical wisdom and prophetic call were highlighted along with the leadership of women, men and youth. God's grace, presence, and constant accompaniment were celebrated. The resilience, solidarity and perseverance of the churches and of those who suffer and struggle were emphasised. The widespread violence, injustice, poverty, intolerance and demonization of the other marked the urgency of the situation. The fact that the affected are found in all places and spaces was noted. The struggle and witness for justice and peace are imperative in all our contexts both in the Global North and the Global South. The violence against women, children, indigenous peoples, Dalits and the marginalization of people with disabilities emerged, as did the victims of the market and economic injustice in the face of growing poverty and inequity. It was noted that much more careful analysis and naming of the context is needed, and naming specific places and groups is not to ignore the others who in the course of our pilgrimage must be given their place in our solidarity and action.

The groups identified some of the actions of transformation that the churches bring to the PJP and need to be included: embracing the realities of mission from the margins; commitment to contextualization and grassroots solidarity and action; repentance and humility of churches in the face of complicity, inaction and silence; advocacy and prophetic action to transform institutions and structures; a spirituality of social involvement; hospitality to the other; prayer, affirmation of human dignity/*Imago Dei*, transformation of persons, society and structures; to understand that our salvation is bound up with the wellbeing of the other. It was noted that the urgent situation of global injustice and widespread violence on the global and local levels requires more reflection and analysis in order to read the *Kairos* through the eyes of faith.

The RG further deepened its understanding of GEN 05 (rev) by receiving three contextualized reflections emphasising the role of the churches.

Ms Berit Agoy located the PJP within the life of the Church of Norway as something that picks up what the church is already about: "More Heaven on Earth". Despite Norway's favourable economic and social situation, it is still imperative to be about justice within Norway as well as internationally. It was noted that the 2016 meeting of the WCC's central committee will be in Norway. The Church of Norway is also joining in the pilgrimage for climate justice.

Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Clapsis engaged the document from an Orthodox perspective as an expression of shift from "staying together" to "moving together". He shared that this is part of the goal of the visible unity of the churches that is theologically grounded and not simply activism, but is an act of the Holy Spirit allowing the churches to act in anticipation of God's Kingdom. He noted that we can only move forward because what unites us is more than what divides us. He reminded the RG that Christians do not craft the common good by themselves.

Rev. Dr Liz Vibila was unable to get a visa from Sri Lanka to be with present at the RG meeting in Switzerland. Her situation highlights the brokenness and injustices in our global context. Her comments were read by Dr Agnes Abuom, moderator of the WCC central committee. She reflected on her two contexts: the post-conflict situation of Sri Lanka where she lives and teaches, and the still conflicted Democratic Republic of Congo that is her home country. Liz noted that "pilgrimage" requires personal transformation and personal accompaniment of the wounded. She believes that the ecumenical movement needs to emphasize the importance of the individuals learning to detect their personal rights and responsibilities in the political, economic, socio-cultural and gender spheres. She stressed the importance of standing aside to let young people show leadership and in ensuring deep theological reflection on the process.

The WCC associate general secretaries and the WCC programme staff presented the WCC programme plans 2014-2017. The reference group then engaged in reflecting on prioritising and

screening from the PJP perspective the programmes in three groups: Unity, Mission, and Ecumenical Relations; Public Witness and Diakonia; and Ecumenical Formation; there was also some specific focus on Interreligious Dialogue. The reference group also focused specific reflections on proposals for the theological study process and on the communications strategies for PJP.

The RG discussed its timeline and working styles and prepared the recommendations for the general secretary which are found in the final section of this report.

II. General overall approach

The reference group embraced the dynamic, participative, integrative, comprehensive and transformative invitation to the PJP as captured in GEN 05 (rev). Moving together requires thinking, acting, praying, reflecting, advocating, caring and serving together in new ways within the WCC, within and among the wider ecumenical movement, with interfaith partners and with all people of goodwill.

In listening to the richness of experience and the depth of suffering across contexts and traditions, and from all the streams of the ecumenical movement, the RG strongly affirmed the integral nature of life, integrity of creation, justice, peace, unity, diakonia and mission. The PJP is in every way born out of, and an essential expression of, the striving together for the visible unity of the church, understanding that unity is part of an unbroken whole with justice, peace, reconciliation and mission. This is emphatically underlined in the Busan Assembly's unity statement: "The unity of the human community and the unity of the whole creation are interconnected. Christ who makes us one calls us to live in justice and peace and impels us to work together for justice and peace in God's world." God's urgent call to justice and peace as part of this integral unity is and must be the faith imperative that guides all the actions of the PJP given the massive threats to life facing the whole *oikoumene*.

Through dialogue and sharing of contexts the RG came to affirm the unbroken link between personal, collective, and social transformation (such as the African concept of *Ubuntu*), and urges working styles and programme approaches that strengthen this dynamic connection. In equal measure, the RG underlined the deep connection between local, regional and global realities which must be taken into account in all serious actions for transformation and change. In this vein, the RG wants to stress the WCC's role is in global analysis, global connections, and global affirmations of the prophetic voice. This analysis must emerge from and link together local realities of the churches.

These affirmations entail a renewed approach to integrated styles of working among the WCC member churches and with the Christian world communions, ACT Alliance and other partners. To put it simply, the PJP creates an opportunity for the work of each unit or commission to be taken into account by the work of the other in an interactive way that embraces the unities and imperatives mentioned above.

In their overall approach, the RG placed a great deal of emphasis on rigorous theological and biblical engagement and underlined the need for such study and reflection to be nurtured by the experience and praxis of the churches and partners and vice versa. Linked to this was a strong call for the WCC to deepen common social, political, economic, cultural and religious analysis and a more comprehensive reading of the global *Kairos* so that actions for justice and peace and our theological reflection will be rooted in historical realities seen through the eyes of faith.

The RG noted with deep concern the underrepresentation of youth not only as members of the RG but also the absence of ecumenical youth movements and Christian student organisations as integral partners in the PJP process to date.

The role of communications on all levels was seen as essential in terms of fluid exchange of information and feedback within the WCC and in and among the RG, WCC leadership and

commissions but also in engaging member churches and broader partnerships. The influential role of social media both in its destructive and potentially constructive dimensions was noted for further reflection and action.

The RG was deeply appreciative of efforts and strong support of the PJP WCC staff team and all who gave input and provided information for the meeting.

III. Governance

Cooperation between the governing bodies, commissions, the RG PJP and staff needs to be ensured. The reference group notes the need for a mechanism for follow-up that would ensure a clear working together of governance (i.e. central committee and executive committee), commissions, staff, and the RG PJP.

1. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that there is a consultation, which would take place in 2015, and that would include the PJP reference group leadership, the leadership of the central committee, the leadership of each commission, and the general secretary in order to effectively consult and coordinate the work of the PJP.

There needs to be a commitment to the full and integral presence and participation of ecumenical youth movements and youth in the whole process of the PJP. The reference group laments the underrepresentation of youth, as this is a significant crisis.

The group would note that adding more people from ecumenical youth movements to the reference group is important; however, this cannot be the only action to further the active involvement of youth in the pilgrimage of justice and peace. The RG PJP requests also more intentional involvement of youth movements.

2. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that three additional representatives from ecumenical youth movements (including groups such as WSCF, YWCA, YMCA, Syndemos, PaxRomana) be invited to become members of the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace, and that attention be paid to the full participation of these movements in the entire PJP process.

IV. Commissions

The RG PJP recognizes that the PJP represents a radical shift. The PJP is not only about cosmetically adding questions of justice and peace, nor is it about adding one theme to existing work. The PJP is also not simply choosing peace or justice as a focus area, nor is it only about talking about pilgrimage as a metaphor. The PJP is instead about spiritually-rooted transformative processes of churches and partners moving together for justice and peace.

The RG PJP notes that staff and the commissions who have met to date have already taken steps to orient their work towards the 2013 Busan Assembly's mandate related to the pilgrimage of justice and peace. The reference group appreciates that these efforts are moving in the right direction. The RG PJP would particularly commend the desire to integrate the pilgrimage of justice and peace in the work of the commissions. Such integration requires that the constitutional mandates of each commission, their methodology and working styles are not seen in isolation of each other and are being interpreted in the perspective of the PJP.

To do this integration and re-orientation effectively, the reference group underlines the need for each commission to be working with a common understanding of the transformative nature of the PJP, for

the commissions to intentionally prioritize their work under the umbrella of the PJP, and for all the commissions to share progress on their work on the PJP with governing bodies and interested partners. This could also facilitate the work of the RG PJP and of those who are both members of the RG PJP and of a commission in a good and helpful way.

3. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace recommends that:
    a. the PJP be an important agenda item for each commission meeting
    b. each commission include in their commission reports an outcome of their work, activities, commitments, suggestions and ideas about the PJP
    c. the members of the commissions, who are also members of the RG PJP, report on the work of their commissions at each meeting of the reference group
    d. group feedback mechanisms are created in between in-person meetings of the RG PJP so that the reference group can continue its oversight, overview and assessment of the PJP activities in the commissions
    e. processes are offered at the 2016 meeting of the RG PJP on the PJP which would enable in-depth evaluation of the progress of the PJP
    f. methods for mutual accountability are established among those partners participating in the PJP.

V. Partnerships

The PJP is not being undertaken by WCC member churches alone; they have companions on the road (including partners such as ACT Alliance, Christian world communions, the Roman Catholic Church, and ecumenical youth movements) who are called to be active participants in the PJP. The reference group appreciates the manner in which they have embraced the pilgrimage and are assured of their continued support and companionship as we work together.

ACT Alliance, the Christian world communions, the Roman Catholic Church, ecumenical youth movements and interfaith partnerships are prime examples of groups which are integral to the pilgrimage of justice and peace. The inclusion of social movements, such as the World Social Forum provides a ready *segue* for the unfolding of new ways of co-working. The work of the PJP draws into sharp focus the roles of diakonia, advocacy and response to suffering. It is in the vein of being more fully prepared to deliver its roles that the Pilgrimage of justice and peace invites all partners to arrive at more integrated ways of working.

4. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that the staff group explores and develops newer and deeper ways of working with Christian world communions, the Roman Catholic Church, ACT Alliance, ecumenical youth movements, and ecumenical networks.

The God of creation invites all people to journey together for justice and peace. In recognition of our joint responsibility for mutual care of the community, the PJP enters into further partnerships with people of many faiths. The reference group notes that churches are both responding to the invitation to be part of the PJP, and the RG is also making an invitation to interfaith partners and people of goodwill. More importantly, the PJP is a response to the invitation of the world to respond to pain, suffering, and the urgent plight of creation. It is therefore essential to move towards a firm plan for involving interfaith partners and people of goodwill as to how this will happen, and part of the plan must include equipping the church with the necessary dialogue and coalition-building skills to make this plan real.

5. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that stronger links be established with new and existing ecumenical and interfaith partners in order to forward the objectives of the PJP, and that a firm plan for

involving ecumenical and interfaith partners and people of goodwill is developed, that would include strategies to equip churches with the necessary dialogue and coalition-building skills to make this plan real.

VI. Methodologies

The programme review showed that a clear methodology has to be applied to ensure that programmes are really shaped by the vision and objectives of the PJP and are concrete expressions of the essential characteristics of the PJP. Some examples were offered as new approaches to programmatic work, but the newness is not evident by itself and not yet well-enough articulated in terms of new PJP methodologies.

6. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that in developing and applying the PJP process, there needs to be further attention to articulating new methodological approaches, and to ensure that these methodologies are consistently applied and reviewed.

The church is called to be in solidarity with the suffering people and the suffering world, but the pilgrimage embraces all of creation in all of our places and spaces. For the PJP to be effective, it will require people in places of privilege stepping out of their comfort zones. We as church will also need to speak truth to power, including global structures such as the World Bank or the IMF.

7. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that avenues for representatives of churches and ecumenical partners be established for the upgrading of skills for further equipping at the local, regional and international levels to accompany and implement the PJP.

VII. Theological Study Process

The mandate of the reference group on PJP includes "to contribute to the theological study process on issues related to the pilgrimage of justice and peace following the recommendation by the report of the programme guidelines committee of the 10th assembly". The reference group notes that theology needs to be integrated with critical reflection on a global reading the signs of the times, and understanding the *kairos* moment. Theology must be integrated in a social analysis. Part of this theological integration would include *praxis:* an approach that our actions must inform our reflections, and that our reflections must inform our actions.

The reference group strongly affirms the ecumenical heritage of embracing the integral nature of life, justice, peace, diakonia, unity, ecclesiology, spirituality, and mission pursuing the visible unity of the church as stated in article III of the Constitution and Rules of the WCC and re-affirmed by the unity statement of the Busan Assembly. A clearly defined study process can help to deepen this essential unity. Such a process could also be precise about how to articulate the commonality between these inter-related dimensions of being church.

The voices of people from the margins who are struggling against powers and cultures of exclusion will be an essential part and perspectives of a theological study process.

8. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends the creation of a theological study process working group which would start as soon as possible, and whose membership would include the following:
   - 2 people from the reference group on PJP
   - 1 person from the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs

- 1 person from the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
- 1 person from the ECHOS Commission
- 1 person from the Ecumenical Theological Education and Formation Commission
- 1 person from the Faith and Order Commission

and that would incorporate representation of different church traditions, regions, and from people on the margins, and that would be accompanied by members of the PJP staff group.

9. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that the mandate of the theological study process working group would include, but not be limited to the following:
   a. ensuring the development of an integral, effective, and inclusive study process
   b. ensuring that the study process is based on a deep analysis of church and world
   c. including integration of *praxis* and the global *kairos* where theology is integrated in a social analysis
   d. theological interpretation of pilgrimage and a theological interpretation of justice and peace.

VIII. Programme

The RG PJP examined different programme areas and gave some consideration to the programme plans and advice was given to staff. There were overarching recommendations and specific recommendations. Here, the recommendations made for the area on ecumenical education and formation, are mentioned as only one example, and that are taking up recommendations by the Ecumenical Theological Education and Formation Commission that met in mid-February 2015 at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey:

- The newly-built network of teachers of ecumenical theology would intentionally link with the PJP from the very beginning.
- That at Bossey would offer a one-week formation seminar (or workshop) of national PJP coordinators. (If a system of national PJP coordinators was to be developed.) This would bring together people who are key players in their regions. They would also need to work on educational resources.
- To have international ecumenical consultation with coordinators for the PJP, which would work with them to cultivate the PJP in their prospective contexts.
- That Bossey would offer a one-week formation seminar that pulls together young people. Think about incorporating young students, and with an interfaith focus, on the PJP; this would be more an introduction to the PJP and would include activists and young theologians.

The reference group also noted that there were several recommendations related to programme.

10. **Recommendation:** reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that to explicitly build on the WCC's identities, heritages, commitments, and histories for the PJP (including for example, the unity statement, Together Towards Life, and the Economy of Life, Decade to Overcome Violence/just peace declaration while noting that this is not an exhaustive list) to fore-ground them and to build them into the identity of the PJP, and not merely as documents of reference.

11. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends a deepening of the contextual and global analysis about the situations where the PJP is taken up and programmes are being implemented.

12. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that the communications staff team works with the moderators of the PJP reference group to produce a clear, concise, and plain-language one-paragraph statement about what the PJP is.

13. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that face-to-face and mutual solidarity and accompaniment exercises (such as "living letters") be incorporated as a programme component.

14. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends the creation of a management tool that allows the reference group to track the contributions and that makes transparent and visible the various actions of all levels of the WCC in relation to the PJP.

15. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends working with the ecumenical officers' network to develop national involvement in the PJP.

16. **Recommendation:** the reference group on the pilgrimage of justice and peace recommends that the PJP focuses on particular topics and particular themes for each year of the PJP in order to give it an effective profile.

APPENDIX VI: ACTIONS ON PUBLIC ISSUES

The following actions have been taken on public issues since the actions on public issues reported in the last meeting of the executive committee (21-26 November 2014, in Paralimni, Cyprus):

AFRICA

2014

3 December	Statement by WCC general secretary following the attack on the Great Mosque of Kano in **Nigeria**, resulting in the deaths of over 100 people, extending sympathies to those bereaved or wounded.

2015

12 January	Statement by WCC expressing deep shock over the attacks by extremist group Boko Haram in **Nigeria**, said to have cost the lives of more than 2,000 people, including children used in suicide bomb attacks.
22 January	Statement by WCC condemning the attacks on churches in **Niger**, resulting in the destruction of more than 70 churches and the killing of an undetermined number of people. These events followed the *Charlie Hebdo* attack and the "Je suis Charlie" campaign in support of the controversial French weekly publication.
22 January	Statement by WCC acting general secretary, expressing deep concern over reports of widespread violent demonstrations in Kinshasa, **Democratic Republic of Congo** since 19 January, in response to a draft electoral law.
3 April	Statement by WCC general secretary condemning the terror attack on the campus of Garissa University in North East **Kenya**, and expressing grave concern over the reports of nearly 150 people massacred and almost 80 others left wounded by al-Shabaab extremists, who reportedly explicitly targeted Christian students on the basis of their faith.
16 April	Joint statement by Sudan Council of Churches and WCC Consultation on Peace in **South Sudan**, urging the international community to engage constructively with the people of South Sudan in development and capacity-building initiatives.
21 April	Letter of solidarity from WCC general secretary to His Holiness Abuna Mathias, Patriarch of the **Ethiopian** Orthodox Tewahedo Church, expressing deep shock over the recent killing of more than 20 Ethiopian Christians in Libya by the so-called Islamic State (IS).
21 April	Letter from WCC general secretary to H.E. Muhammadu Buhari, president-elect of **Nigeria**, conveying congratulations on behalf of the WCC, and stressing the importance of protecting freedom of religion or belief as a basic human right.
24 April	Statement by WCC general secretary, condemning recent violent attacks against migrants in **South Africa**, reaffirming churches' positions against racist, ethnocentrist and xenophobic acts of violence, and urging leaders in South Africa, as well as in other countries in the region, to promote the observance of human rights at all times.
4 May	Call by WCC for a special day of prayer on 10 May for peace in **South Sudan**, inviting its member churches to pray for those affected by the South Sudanese conflict, for the revival of peace talks, and for new ways ahead.

5 May — Joint statement by WCC and the All Africa Conference of Churches, expressing their profound concern over reports of widespread and violent demonstrations in **Burundi** in relation to forthcoming presidential elections, and calling for peaceful dialogue.

27 May — WCC and Church leaders in **South Sudan** urge South Sudan government to stop the war, as the tragic situation of conflict in South Sudan moves into its 18th month.

ASIA-PACIFIC

2014

3 December — Address by WCC general secretary to the 4th Global Inter-Religious conference on Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, in **Japan**, expressing grave concern at the Japanese government's initiative to reinterpret or change Article 9. Adopted as part of the constitution in 1947, following the Second World War, the article outlaws war as a means for Japan to resolve international disputes.

17 December — Statement by WCC general secretary following the massacre of dozens of students and staff in Peshawar, **Pakistan**, extending sympathies and offering prayers for the victims and their families.

2015

5 February — Letter of solidarity from WCC general secretary to the member churches in **Sri Lanka** and the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka, in response to their pastoral letter of December 2014 concerning the presidential elections.

6 March — Tribute from WCC general secretary to Dr Ninan Koshy, former director of the WCC's Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), renowned academic, theologian and political analyst, who passed away in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, **India** on 4 March.

16 March — Letter from WCC general secretary to the member churches in **Vanuatu** and the Pacific region, expressing concern and grief over the destruction caused by the cyclone in Vanuatu, and offering prayers for the people and churches.

16 March — Letter from WCC general secretary to the churches in **Pakistan** following bomb attacks on two churches in Lahore, Pakistan, condemning the violence against people and communities on the basis of their religious identity, and calling upon the Pakistani government to act swiftly in bringing the perpetrators to justice.

19 March — Letter from WCC general secretary to the National Council of Churches in **India**, expressing support to the churches in India amidst increasing acts of violence and vandalism affecting Christian communities in the country.

26 April — Joint statement by WCC and the Christian Conference in Asia following the earthquake that struck **Nepal**, offering heartfelt condolences to the people of Nepal and northern India who lost loved ones, and calling for urgent humanitarian action.

28 April — Letter from WCC general secretary to H.E. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of **Indonesia**, appealing for clemency for the ten death row prisoners scheduled for imminent execution in Indonesia, and asking for an immediate moratorium on the planned executions, with a view to abolishing the death penalty.

EUROPE
2015

7 January	Statement by acting WCC general secretary condemning the armed attack on the Paris, **France** offices of the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*, which resulted in the killing of twelve persons, stating that it was an attack on human life, human dignity and the human rights of all.
10 February	Tribute from WCC to Leopoldo J. Niilus, former director of the WCC's Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), renowned lawyer, peace negotiator and author of several writings on human rights and international affairs, who passed away on 9 February in Geneva, **Switzerland**.
13 February	Statement by acting WCC general secretary, welcoming the ceasefire agreement for eastern **Ukraine**, and urging all parties to the conflict to continue their steps towards peace, to maintain a commitment to dialogue and diplomacy, and to refrain from further violence.
18 February	Letter from WCC general secretary to Rt. Rev. Peter Skov-Jakobsen, Bishop of Copenhagen, expressing deep concern about the acts of terror in Copenhagen, **Denmark**, and expressing solidarity with the Danish people.
20 March	Communiqué of a WCC solidarity delegation visit to **Ukraine**, reporting that "the delegation has heard a consistent call for the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement to inform the international community about the situation in Ukraine, to promote a more adequate humanitarian response to the human suffering resulting from the conflict, and to support and strengthen the efforts of the churches and faith communities of Ukraine for justice and peace."
24 March	Joint message from WCC and the Conference of European Churches expressing deepest sympathies to friends and families touched by the tragedy of Germanwings plane crash in the **French Alps**.
31 March	Tribute from WCC to Rev. Dr Philip Potter, the third general secretary of the WCC, who served in that office from 1972 to 1984. A global ecumenical leader known for accompanying churches around the world in their struggles for unity, justice and peace, Rev. Dr Philip Potter died on 31 March at the age of 93 in Lübeck, **Germany**.
20 April	Joint statement by WCC, the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe and the Conference of European Churches, grieving for the hundreds of migrants drowned in the **Mediterranean Sea**, and calling on European Union member states for preventative action.
24 April	WCC commemorates the centenary of the **Armenian** genocide and remembers the 1.5 million Armenian victims who died 100 years ago.
18 May	Statement by WCC general secretary on resumption of **Cyprus** talks between Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders on the longstanding division of the island, encouraging leaders on both sides, affirming their announced commitment "to work tirelessly to reach as soon as possible a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus question" and to pursue a "shared vision for a united federal Cyprus".

LATIN AMERICA

2014

18 December — Statement by WCC general secretary, following the positive developments in relations between **Cuba** and the United States announced by their governments, expressing gratitude for the process.

2015

29 January — Letter from WCC acting general secretary to Dr Juan Manuel Santos Calderon, President of the Republic of **Colombia**, concerning serious death threats to human rights defenders, several of them church leaders, which have been made by a paramilitary group in Colombia, and calling on the Colombian government to take all necessary measures to protect their life and physical integrity.

10 April — Joint statement from the Cuban Council of Churches, the Latin American Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches USA and the WCC, urging normalization of **Cuba**-USA relations.

MIDDLE EAST

2014

26 November — **Statement on Forced Displacement, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Middle East**, adopted by WCC executive committee, urging all countries to take special measures to protect and support refugees and displaced people from the Middle East, especially those from Syria, Iraq and Israel-Palestine.

4 December — Joint Statement by Kairos Palestine, the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum and the Alternative Tourism Group, at the international conference in Bethlehem, **Palestine**, commemorating the 5th anniversary of "A Moment of Truth: A world of Faith, Hope and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering", known as “Kairos Palestine”.

17 February — Letter from WCC general secretary to H. H. Pope Tawadros II, patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church in **Egypt**, expressing the WCC's deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of 21 Egyptian Christians kidnapped and killed by the so-called "Islamic State" (IS) militants in Libya.

25 February — Statement by WCC acting general secretary condemning the latest attacks and atrocities reported to have been committed by the so-called "Islamic State" against Assyrian Christians in **Syria**.

27 February — Statement by WCC acting general secretary condemning recent attacks against a mosque in the **West Bank** and a Christian centre in **Jerusalem** that appear to be part of the series of so-called "price-tag" attacks by extremist elements.

7-12 March — Solidarity visit by the leadership of WCC Central Committee to **Israel and Palestine,** as an expression of the pilgrimage of justice and peace, affirming the WCC's commitment to support the peace process in the Holy Land and in the Middle East, and reiterating its wish for a just peace in the region.

23 March — Oral intervention delivered by CCIA/WCC at the UN Human Rights Council 28th Session on the human rights situation in **Palestine** and other occupied Arab territories, highlighting the persistent and acute problem of settler violence in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and calling on the government of Israel to take all possible measures to prevent violent attacks by settlers.

24 March — Letter from WCC general secretary inviting WCC member churches to pray on Sunday 29 March for those affected by wars in the **Middle East**, especially in Iraq, Syria, Libya and Egypt. The season of prayer is meant to revive hope from hopelessness, taking into account the vulnerability of minority communities and the threat of losing the diversity of the social fabric in this region.

NORTH AMERICA

2014

26 November — **Minute on Racial Tensions in the United States of America**, adopted by the WCC executive committee, expressing deep concern over recent developments in the United States following the Grand Jury's decision not to indict officer Darren Wilson in the killing of Michael Brown.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

2015

6 March — Presentation by WCC general secretary at a high level panel on **human rights and climate change** held at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, during the 28th session of the Human Rights Council full-day discussion, stating that despite all negative conditions "we have the right to hope" – not as a matter of passive waiting but as an active process towards justice and peace, in which human rights should play a key role.

17 March — A coalition of civil society and labour groups launched an **Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation** (ICRICT) in response to rising inequality and mounting public anger over corporate tax cheats. Among the organizations responsible for the establishment of the Commission is the WCC.

22 April — **Act Now for Climate Justice campaign** was launched on Earth Day, involving churches, religious organizations and civil society around the world in raising awareness on climate change effects, and calling on world leaders to cut carbon emissions drastically, and to help the world's poorest to cope with the impacts of climate change while engaging in development in a sustainable way.

28 April — Message on achieving human dignity, and the right to hope, in a world threatened by **climate change**, proclaimed by WCC general secretary in a meeting convened on climate change by the Vatican.

HUMAN RIGHTS, PEACE AND SECURITY

2014

6-9 December — Christian, Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu leaders' panel at a global civil society forum in Vienna, 6 December, co-organized and hosted by WCC. The panel's joint statement **Faith Communities on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons**, was delivered to the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, 8-9 December 2014, Vienna, Austria.

24 December — On 24 December 2014 an international law to regulate the global trade in armaments and ammunition, the newly ratified **Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)**, entered into force. Along with civil society groups and governments in every region of the world, WCC member churches and partners in some 50 countries had campaigned and lobbied for three years for an ATT that would help save lives and protect communities at risk because lethal weapons were being traded with few restrictions.

2015

24 February — Comment by the CCIA Director, expressing regrets that the participation of civil society organizations in the **United Nations Conference on Disarmament**, including the WCC, were again being denied access and effective participation.

23 March	Joint letter to US Secretary of State Mr John F. Kerry, urging the United States as a member of the UN ECOSOC Committee on NGOs, to support the nongovernmental organization **International Dalit Solidarity Network** (IDSN) in obtaining UN special consultative status, so that it could promote the elimination of case-based discrimination.
2 April	Invitation by the CCIA director to EPAN (Ecumenical Peace Advocacy Network) participants for a joint "**Interfaith declaration in support of a ban on fully autonomous weapons**", calling for a comprehensive, pre-emptive ban of such weapons and calling on all governments to join the international debate and to work towards a ban before the weapons are developed and deployed.
9 April	WCC joined a statement by religious and faith-based organization leaders titled "**Ending Extreme Poverty: A Moral and Spiritual Imperative**", calling for the elimination of extreme poverty by 2030.
1 May	Joint inter-religious statement, "**Faith Communities Concerned about the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons**", delivered by WCC during the UN Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in New York. EPAN participants from Australia, Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas contacted their governments with WCC policy goals in advance of the conference, with several in-person meetings held in follow-up.

APPENDIX VII: STATEMENT ON THE CENTENARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

During the centenary year of the Armenian genocide by the Ottoman Empire, the executive committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) is meeting in this country on 8-13 June 2015, hosted by the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, to honour the martyrs and victims of the genocide. We visit the genocide memorial to remember them and to pray in the name of the risen Lord Jesus Christ. And we celebrate the life of the Armenian nation and the witness of the Armenian church.

The executive committee recalls the Minute on the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide adopted by the WCC 10th Assembly in 2013 in Busan. This important action by the 10th Assembly followed many other occasions on which the WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) had called for recognition of the Armenian genocide by the United Nations (UN) and by member states, dating back to the 1979 session of the UN Human Rights Commission. The WCC has played a key role over many years in accompanying the Armenian church in speaking out and working for recognition of the genocide, and for appropriate responses to the genocide's continuing impacts on the Armenian people.

A minute adopted at the 6th Assembly of the WCC held in 1983 in Vancouver acknowledged that "The silence of the world community and deliberate efforts to deny even historical facts have been consistent sources of anguish and growing despair to the Armenian people, the Armenian churches and many others." While some continue their efforts to deny or minimize these historical events, the executive committee is greatly encouraged by His Holiness Pope Francis' public recognition on 12 April 2015 of the mass killing of an estimated 1.5 million Armenians as genocide. We stress that there is a duty on the international community to remember the victims of genocide, in order to heal these historical wounds and to guard against similar atrocities in the future.

The WCC, with its many member churches, has participated in several events marking the centenary, including the official commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and canonization of the martyrs in Yerevan, Armenia, on 21-25 April. The WCC and its member churches will continue to participate in the on-going centennial commemorations this year by the Armenian diaspora, including with the Armenian Church Holy See of Cilicia in Antelias, Lebanon, on 18-19 July. The executive committee thanks the many member churches and ecumenical partners around the world that have observed or will observe this on-going centenary in their own contexts, and that have spoken in recognition of the genocide and in commemoration of its victims. Through these commemorations, we acknowledge that these tragic events occurred, and that they must be named by their right name.

The Armenian genocide was accompanied in the same historical and political context by genocidal acts against other – mostly Christian – communities of Aramean, Chaldean, Syrian, Assyrian and Greek descent, which have blighted history at the beginning of the 20th century.

Denial, impunity and the failure to remember such events encourage their repetition. Those who deny or attack the life and dignity of a sister or brother undermine and destroy the humanity of both the victim and themselves. These centennial commemorations should mark the passing of the time when governments remain reluctant to name what occurred one hundred years ago as genocide. We urge all governments to abandon this reluctance.

In this centenary year, we call the international community, the WCC's member churches and all people of faith and good will to remembrance, and to re-commit to the prevention of genocide and all crimes against humanity.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5:11-12)

APPENDIX VIII: STATEMENT ON RESPONSES TO MIGRANT CRISES

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. (Matthew 25:35)

The executive committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) expresses its deep concern for the lives of the increasing numbers of people globally who, fleeing from situations of violence, oppression, occupation or economic deprivation, are driven to undertake journeys of desperate risk and danger. This escalating global problem, with different expressions and responses in different contexts, has been recently and tragically exemplified by the deaths of unprecedented numbers of migrants and refugees seeking to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe, and of Rohingya and Bangladeshi migrants on the Andaman Sea. The recent killings of Ethiopian Christian migrant workers by the so-called 'Islamic State' in Libya, and the xenophobic violence against migrants in South Africa, are also illustrative of the special vulnerability of people who leave their home countries in the universal human pursuit of safety and a better life for themselves and their families.

The WCC acknowledges and respects the prerogative of sovereign states to define arrangements for the control of their own borders and the conditions of entry and stay, and recognizes the challenge posed by the volume of irregular migrants. But we expect all states to honour the letter and spirit of their obligations under international law, including human rights and refugee law. We consider it legally and ethically inadmissible for states to abdicate their responsibilities for saving lives and providing protection, or to seek to 'outsource' them to other states and territories.

All members of the international community have a moral and legal duty to save the lives of those in jeopardy at sea or in transit, regardless of their origin and status. We acknowledge and affirm the efforts of many seafarers to rescue people at sea. And we welcome the European Union's commitment to tripling the resources for Operations 'Triton' and 'Poseidon' in the Mediterranean Sea, but search-and-rescue must be clearly defined as the top priority of these operations. Similarly, governments of South East Asian countries must ensure that people in danger at sea or in transit are rescued rather than put back in jeopardy.

In the case of Europe, we are aware of concerns about the volume of legal migration within the EU bloc. However this matter is addressed it must not be at the expense of refugees and other people fleeing situations of extreme distress. We note that the responsibility for receiving the increasing numbers of irregular migrants and refugees rests most heavily at present on Italy and Greece, and it is clear that a fairer distribution of responsibility within the EU is both morally desirable and practically necessary. We therefore welcome proposals for a fairer sharing of this responsibility across the EU, and believe that EU member states should support this objective. In any such distribution process, the motives and aspirations of refugees and migrants should be taken into consideration in determining their placement.

The criminal enterprise of smugglers and traffickers taking advantage of vulnerable and desperate people must certainly be stopped. We note with concern however the EU's proposed anti-smuggling strategy, entailing a 'chapter 7' resolution by the UN Security Council authorizing the use of military force. In the absence of wider channels for legal and secure migration, people smugglers flourish, and the use of military force to prevent their activities risks making the journeys of irregular migrants and refugees even more perilous. Further, there should be a clearly defined political end goal for any such application of armed force. We are also concerned that military action within Libyan waters and territory risks further destabilizing a highly unstable region.

We note with concern that most of the short-term measures taken by the governments of affected countries and regions address the symptoms – irregular migrant arrivals – rather than the root causes of these population movements. The drivers of the population outflows are the situations of violence, oppression, occupation and economic deprivation which cause people to feel that they have no choice

but to put their lives in such appalling jeopardy. Any comprehensive and genuine approach to addressing this challenge must therefore also encompass stronger and more effective long-term international action to resolve the conflicts, to end oppression and occupation, and to eliminate the extreme poverty from which so many people are obliged to flee.

We question the logic of a 'closed-door' 'fortress' mentality to addressing these challenges – whether in Europe, South East Asia, Australia or elsewhere in the world. Migration is a phenomenon common to all times and societies. A world that allows goods and capital to cross every border, but that does not allow its people to do the same risks losing its humanity. The great contributions made by migrants and refugees to the societies, economies and cultures of their countries of residence, whether permanent or temporary, need to be recognised. A strategy focussed on closing borders between nations and defending those borders against 'strangers' is – in the end – not only futile, but also harmful for all parties concerned – with the sole exception of the smugglers and traffickers who thrive wherever doors are shut.

Therefore, the WCC executive committee:

- Urges all states to provide for generous, safe, humane and accessible procedures for the legal migration of people into and out of their territories and to take proper measures against the abuse of the vulnerability of migrants, wherever they are.
- Calls on all governments to fulfil their moral and legal duty to save the lives of those in jeopardy at sea or in transit, and to refrain from any actions that might further endanger them. They should be received and cared for in conditions of respect and human dignity, regardless of their origin and prima facie status.
- Calls on EU member states to support the objective of achieving a fair distribution of responsibility within the EU for receiving and caring for the increasing numbers of irregular migrants and refugees.
- Calls on the members of the international community, and our governments, to commit to stronger and more effective long-term international action to resolve the conflicts, to end oppression and occupation, and to eliminate the extreme poverty driving these population movements.
- Invites WCC member churches and ecumenical partners, together with all people of goodwill, to promote a more open and welcoming approach to the 'stranger' and to the neighbour in need and distress, and to help receive and care for refugees and migrants in full respect for their God-given human dignity.

APPENDIX IX: CYPRUS, ISRAEL-PALESTINE, AND RACISM IN USA

Other important issues and stations on the pilgrimage of justice and peace that were considered by the public issues sub-committee included:

Cyprus

At its previous meeting, in Cyprus on 21-26 November 2014, the executive committee had the opportunity to renew its understanding of the history and current reality of the people and churches of Cyprus. The meeting included a discussion with the UN Special Advisor on Cyprus Espen Barth Eide, who offered a more hopeful perspective on the prospects for the unity of the island and its people. In the meantime, new signs of hope have emerged, with the recent resumption of negotiations between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders. The public issues sub-committee wishes to acknowledge these signs of hope. The general secretary issued a statement on 18 May 2015 on the resumption of the Cyprus talks, and the public issues sub-committee therefore does not propose a further statement/minute on the matter by the executive committee at this time. However, the general secretary is requested to closely follow developments in this process, and to offer such support to the churches and political leaders of Cyprus as may be possible and appropriate to encourage progress towards an end of the occupation and division.

Israel-Palestine

The public issues sub-committee is cognizant of further deterioration of political prospects for a just and sustainable peace in Israel-Palestine and for implementation of the two-state solution. Expanded illegal settlement activity in the Occupied Territories and renewed military action in Gaza are of particular concern. The public issues sub-committee does not propose a statement/minute on this matter for action at this meeting of the executive committee, but asks CCIA to reflect on this matter, and to propose a suitable text for consideration by the executive committee at its next meeting.

Racism in USA

The public issues sub-committee received and took note of a statement by the Pan-Methodist Commission on racism in the United States of America, in particular focussing on institutional racism and violence by law enforcement agencies and officers. This matter is closely related to the subject of a minute adopted by the executive committee at its previous meeting on 21-26 November 2014. The public issues sub-committee shares the concerns raised in the statement it received, and affirms the actions proposed and taken by the churches of the USA to address this situation. While the public issues sub-committee did not propose a further statement/minute by the executive committee at this time, the general secretary and CCIA are requested to follow this situation closely and to take or propose such action or initiatives as may seem appropriate to support the churches of the USA in addressing this matter.

APPENDIX X: DATES AND VENUES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS

2015		
CC Leadership	29-30 September	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	13-18 November	Bossey, Switzerland
2016		
CC Leadership	January	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	10-16 April (tbc)	Shanghai, China (tbc)
Executive Committee	20-21 June	Norway
Central Committee	22-28 June	Norway
CC Leadership	Sept/Oct	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	18-23 November	Bossey, Switzerland
2017		
CC Leadership	February	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	10-16 May	Amman, Jordan (tbc)
CC Leadership	August	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	17-22 November	Bossey, Switzerland
2018		
CC Leadership	January	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	Mar/April	tbd
Executive Committee	June/July (2 days)	Geneva, Switzerland
Central Committee	June/July	Geneva, Switzerland
CC Leadership	Sept/Oct	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	November	tbd
2019		
CC Leadership	February	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	May/June	tbd
CC Leadership	August	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	November	tbd
2020		
CC Leadership	January	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	Mar/April	Bossey, Switzerland
Executive Committee	June/July (2 days)	Geneva, Switzerland
Central Committee	June/July	Geneva, Switzerland
CC Leadership	August	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	November	tbd
2021		
CC Leadership	Jan/Feb	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	May/June	Geneva/Bossey, Switzerland
Assembly		tbd

APPENDIX XI: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, JUNE 2015

Adoption of the Agenda (see page 8)

The overall agenda was approved by consensus.

Approval of Minutes (see page 9)

The executive committee minutes from July 2014 were approved by consensus.

The executive committee minutes of July 2014 were approved by consensus, with the understanding that the general secretary will bring an amendment to the next meeting of the executive committee.

Approval of Sub-Committee Membership (see page 9)

The membership of the sub-committees was approved by consensus.

Report of the Audit Committee (see page 29)

The report of the audit committee was received by consensus.

Financial Report 2014 and Detailed Report of the Auditors (see page 30)

The finance sub-committee recommends that executive committee:
a. adopt the Financial Report 2014; and
b. appoint PwC as auditors for 2015, in accordance with Rule VIII 4 (vii) (a) (ii).

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Revised Budget 2015 (see pages 30-31)

The finance sub-committee recommends that executive committee:

a. commend the general secretary, and the staff leadership group, for his stewardship and leadership in revising the budget; and in communicating the measures and the revised budget to staff in a timely manner;
b. adopt the revised budget, as attached at Appendix 1 to this report;
c. require that the revised budget be distributed to members in accordance with Rule VIII 4 (a) (ii); and
d. require that compliance with the revised policy for vacation days in the amended Staff Regulation be actively managed under the leadership of the general secretary.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Update on the Income Development Strategy(see page 31)

The finance sub-committee recommends that the executive committee:

a. mandate the general secretary to inform the member churches and specialized ministries, on behalf of the executive committee, of the current financial situation and its potential impact on the Strategic Plan 2014-2017, asking them to strengthen their financial stewardship for and engagement with the WCC where possible;

b. require that a revised implementation plan for strengthening fundraising for the Ecumenical Institute be developed for discussion at the executive committee meeting in November 2015;
c. require that the policy on screening new funding partners be presented at the executive committee meeting in November 2015; and
d. require that the policy on financially inactive member churches be reviewed at the executive committee meeting in November 2015.

These recommendations were approved by consensus.

General Reserves and Designated Fund for the Building Project (see page 32)

The finance sub-committee recommends that the executive committee require that:
a. a proposal for transfer from the general reserves to the designated fund for the building project be presented for consideration in November 2015; and
b. a proposal for transfer from the general reserves to the 11th Assembly fund be considered in November 2015.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Framework Budget 2016 (see pages 33-34)

The finance sub-committee **recommends** that the executive committee:
a. require that the projects which have financial profiles including "fixed costs", as listed in the programme financial framework, be included with all other projects when prioritisation criteria are considered;
b. require that the medium-term target level for infrastructure costs to programme, set at 15% of total programme income in 2017, be applied in 2016;
c. support a rate of employer's pension fund contribution of at least 10% in 2016, compared with 12% in 2014 and prior years, and 8% in 2015;
d. authorise the transfer in 2015 of CHF 250,000 from the designated programme fund to the programme funds to cover costs of central committee in 2016; and
e. mandate the general secretary to prepare a plan for 2016, with authority to adjust programmes, including as might be necessary the closure of projects, conferring with the leadership of central committee on progress, in order to ensure that a balanced budget may be presented in November 2015.

This was approved by consensus.

Monitoring Indicators from the Financial Strategy 2014-2017 (see page 34)

The finance sub-committee recommends that executive committee:

require that, given the reduction in programme income now foreseen for 2016, a revised four-year financial scenario be developed for 2016-2019.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Draft Integrated Policy for the Ecumenical Institute at the Château de Bossey (seepage 34)

The finance sub-committee recommends that executive committee **require** that the draft policy be finalised and submitted for approval by executive committee in November 2015.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Ecumenical Trust By-Laws (see page 34)

The finance sub-committee recommends that executive committee:

a. encourage the Board of Trustees in its mandate, and in both the forthcoming review of its by-laws, and in the further development of the Ecumenical Trust to fulfil its purpose in soliciting and managing legacies and other gifts for the ecumenical work of the three partner organisations; and
b. request that, in accordance with article IX of the by-laws, the Board of Trustees forward any proposed amendment to the by-laws to the executive committee for approval.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Review of Investments and Investment Guidelines (see page 35)

The finance sub-committee requested that the staff document the Revised Investment Guidelines, be reviewed and approved by the leadership of the finance sub-committee, and finalised in June 2015.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Action on the Report of the Finance Sub-Committee (see page 35)

The whole report of the finance sub-committee was approved as a whole by consensus.

Action on the Report of the General Secretary (see page 52)

The sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to ask the general secretary:

to reflect further on an overarching theme for the central committee and proposals for plenaries for approval in the meeting of November 2015.

This recommendation was adopted by consensus.

Action on the WCC's Programmatic Work: Integrated, Focused and Result-Oriented (see pages 52-53)

The programme sub-committee recommends that the executive committee:

a. approves the five sets of "criteria for priority setting" to focus the programmatic work in the coming years;
b. encourages the general secretary and staff to make efforts to increase integration, articulation, visibility and clarity of the pilgrimage of justice and peace process in the programmatic work;
c. requests the general secretary and staff develop a plan for 2016 for approval in the executive committee of November 2015 which is realistic from the perspective of finance and staffing, with proposals for discontinuing and merging projects and new ways of working for staff, including closer cooperation with member-churches and ecumenical partners.

These recommendations were adopted by consensus.

Action on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Reference Group Report (see page 53)

The programme sub-committee recommends the executive committee:

a. Approves that the PJP has a. an annual focus on a region and b. a corresponding thematic focus to be developed in conversation with the member churches and ecumenical partners in that particular region;
b. approves that the PJP reference group formulates a proposal to be approved by the general secretary to invite representatives of ecumenical and confessional youth movements to the PJP reference group, provided that the organisations can cover the costs;
c. approves the general direction presented in the report of the PJP reference group including the aforementioned recommendations and asks the general secretary to bring back a report at the November 2015 executive committee for discussion and approval regarding the 16 proposals presented in Doc. No. 15.

These recommendations were adopted by consensus.

Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Emphasis on Israel/Palestine in 2016 (see page 55)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

a. that the pilgrimage of justice and peace focuses in 2016 on the urgent situation in the Middle East and particularly in Israel and Palestine, provided that the PJP reference group further refines the thematic focus in consultation with the general secretary and the member churches and ecumenical partners in the region to be brought to approval to the executive committee of November 2015;
b. that the pilgrimage of justice and peace focuses in 2017 on an African country and that the PJP reference group is asked to develop a concrete proposal in consultation with the general secretary and the member churches and ecumenical partners in the region, using the criteria for priority setting, to be brought for approval to the executive committee of November 2015.

These recommendations were approved by consensus.

Integration of WCC – Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (see page 55)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

a. to approve the general direction of the integration of EAA in the WCC as presented in the document Integration of WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (Doc. No. 16) taking into account the comments made by the programme sub-committee;
b. that the general secretary and staff continue with the programmatic integration taking into account the financial constraints and present to the executive committee in November 2015 clear information on the progress of integration, including staffing, and the options for the coming years.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiatives and Advocacy Plan of Action (see page 55)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

that an updated version of the EHAIA Action Plan is presented to the executive committee in November 2015 in which the global perspective and the integration between EHAIA and the WCC-EAA are developed further.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

Update on WCC-ACT Alliance Programmatic Activities and Relational Policies (see page 56)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

that, while affirming a closer cooperation between WCC and ACT Alliance, action on the document Update on WCC-ACT Alliance Programmatic Activities and Relational Policies (Doc. No. 18) is not taken at this stage but referred to the meeting in November 2015 and that that the executive committee welcomes that ACT Alliance is preferably represented by its moderator or general secretary in the meetings of the executive committee in its entireity.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Churches Engaging for Children in the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace (see page 56)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

that in the memorandum with UNICEF the ecumenical ethos and values are explicitly highlighted as guiding principles for the planning and implementation of joint work and that scheduled evaluations include assessment of this approach.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Reports from the Consultative and Advisory Bodies (see page 57)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

to receive the reports of the consultative and advisory bodies for information and to refer detailed discussions on the reports to its meeting in November 2015.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Communications Report 2015 (see page 57)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee that an up-to-date communications strategy is present in the November 2015 meeting of the executive committee.

This was approved by consensus.

Summary Programme Reports 2014 (see page 58)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

To appreciate and approve the format in which the report was presented and receive the reports 2014.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Note on Procedure (see page 58)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee:

That in the future, all documents are presented and discussed in the plenary with an invitation to bring comments to the programme sub-committee.

This was approved by consensus.

Entire Programme Sub-Committee Report (see page 58)

The whole report of the programme sub-committee was approved by consensus.

Statement on the Centenary of the Armenian Genocide (see page 61)

The revised statement was adopted by consensus.

Statement on Responses to Migrant Crises (see page 61)

The revised statement was approved by consensus.

Cyprus, Israel-Palestine, and Racism in USA (see page 61)

This part of report with changes was approved by consensus.

Action on the Public Issues Report (see page 61)

The full report of the public issues sub-committee was approved by consensus.

Appointment of the New Director of Faith and Order (see page 66)

The name of Rev. Prof Dr Odair Pedroso Mateus was approved to become the new Director of Faith and Order; this was approved by consensus.

Action on the Report of the General Secretary (see page 68)

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee affirmed the general secretary's proposed topics for the thematic plenaries during the 2016 central committee, and **recommends that the plenary themes be:**

1. Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace
2. Christian Faith and Unity
3. Religion and Violence
4. Challenges of Children and Youth of Today
5. Middle East

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Action on Nominations (see page 69)

Regarding the Commission on Ecumenical Education and Formation By-Laws, the staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends the following changes to the text and refers them back to the commission for its reaction and eventual submission to the central committee for its approval:

2.1 – in the quoting of Article III of the Constitution, the line from the preamble, "In seeking *koinonia* in faith and life, witness and service, the churches through the Council will" be added
2.2 – should read, "...in collaboration with member churches, churches, ecumenical partners, academic institutions, and networks"
2.2.3 – should read,"...helping churches and their congregations..."
3.1 – change "appoint" to "elect"
3.2 – full stop after central committee, deleting the text which follows in that point
3.4 – change "consultants" to "advisors"
4.2 – add "or executive committee"
5.2 – the language could be the same as that of the Faith and Order commission by-laws in this regard, "In consultation with his or her nominating body a member of the commission may name a person to represent him or her at any meeting at which the member is unable to be present."
5.3 – change "consultant" to "advisor"
5.4 – should read, "A quorum for the conduct of any business by the commission shall be one-half of its membership."

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Mid-term Election of the Executive Committee (see page 70)

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that the executive committee:

a. set the process and the timelines for the mid-term elections;
b. encourage confessional and/or regional (sub-regional) groups of the executive committee (and if necessary of the central committee) to make proposals;
c. identify cases where further consultation with member churches might be needed;
d. consider the possibility of making its own proposals in case the targets are not met through consultation.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Action on the Report of the Staffing, Personnel, and Nominations Sub-committee (see page 70)

The whole report of the staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee was approved by consensus.